

PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA



BULLY

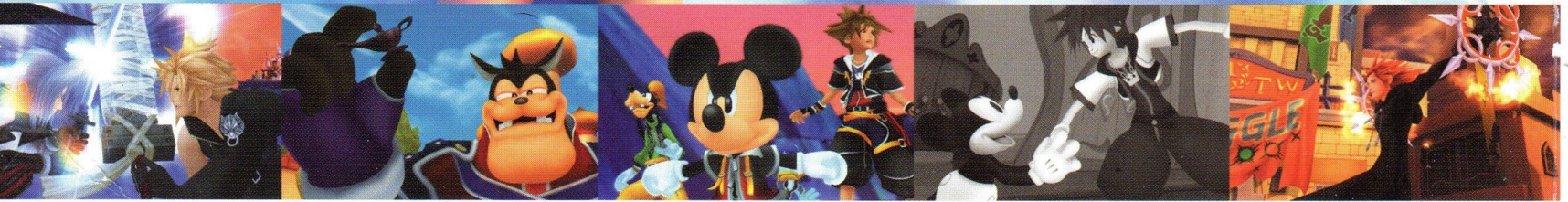
WHY IS IT SO CONTROVERSIAL?
THE SHOCKING TRUTH INSIDE!

ISSUE 58 OCTOBER 2006
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PG

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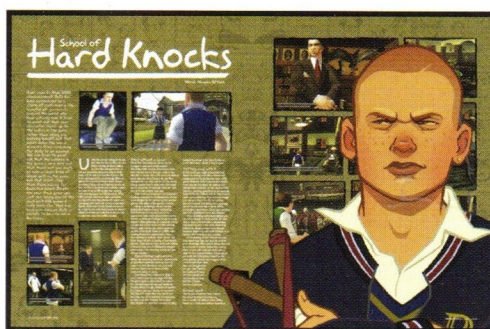
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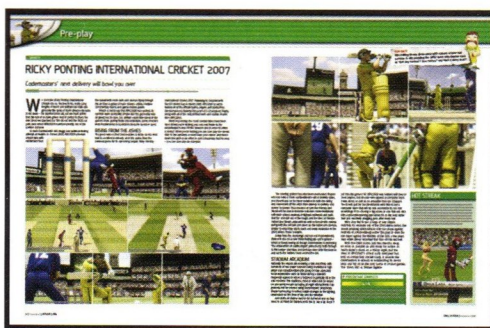
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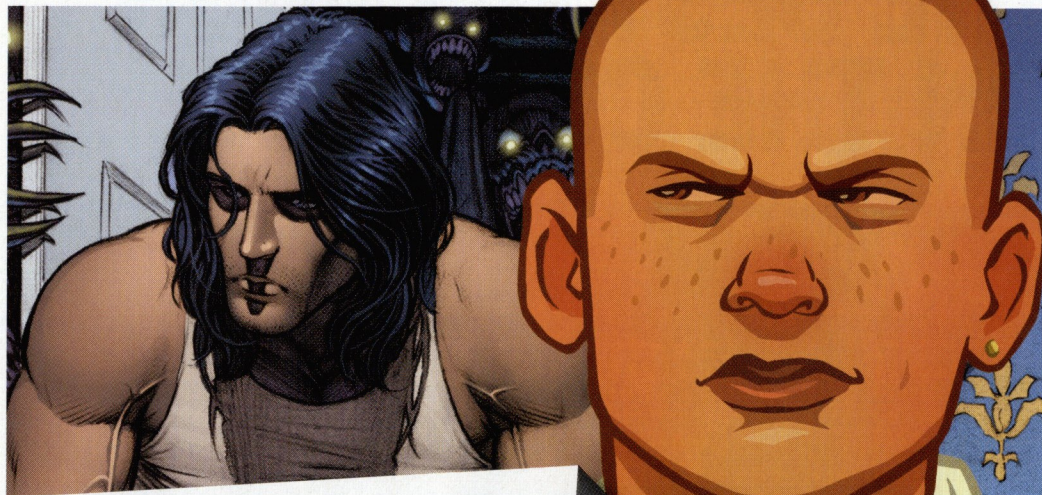
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HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?

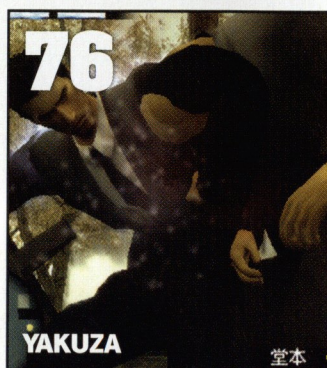
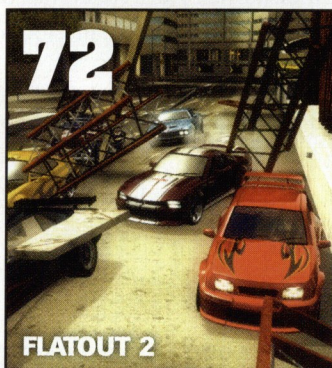
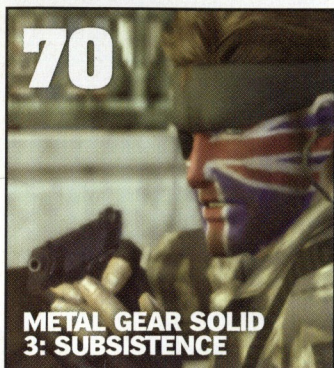
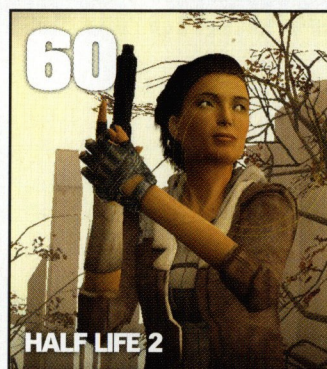
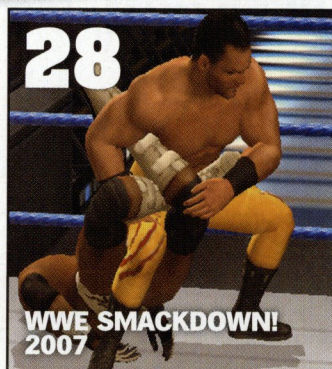
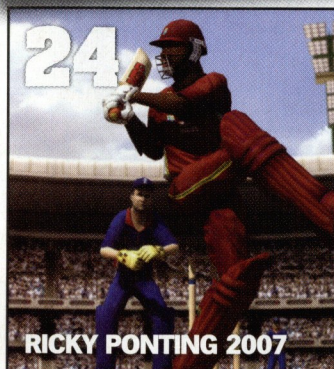
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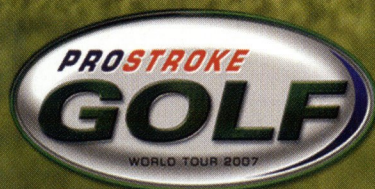
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Shout outs :: David "Speedboating MF" Wildgoose :: Kathy "Novelist" Charles :: Solid Joel and the Activate event :: E3, so long :: Peter Helliar

DERWENT HOWARD



EDITOR'S LETTER

I'm angry. Normally I'm a very easy-going guy. Ask anyone. Well, anyone except that girl I sucker-punched this morning for cutting in front of me at the coffee cart. If you've read our exclusive *Bully* preview (or eulogy as it may turn out to be) you'll know what I'm angry about.

We're used to gaming censorship in Australia. The last few years in particular have seen many games either modified or banned. While I was frustrated in principle with this censorship I can't say I was honestly too bothered by it. I definitely don't think previous casualties like *Manhunt*, *Marc Ecko's Getting Up* or *Reservoir Dogs* should have been banned but I can't say I mourned any of them overly.

While none of the previous casualties could be considered tragedies, *Bully's* potential ban is much more worrying. Not only is *Bully* the first really good game to be potentially banned, but it looks like it could well be the best PS2 game of the year.

There are another couple of serious problems as well. Firstly, *Bully* is by far the least violent game yet to come under the ban-hammer. There is no blood, guns or death to be found anywhere in the game. If it was rated it wouldn't receive anything higher than an M. The other major frustration is that our archaic gaming ratings system has nothing to do with *Bully's* potential ban. It all stems from pressure anti-videogame groups have levelled at Sony in Europe. Just when we thought we were close to convincing the government to introduce an R rating and thus win the war against games censorship, it appears we actually have a much bigger battle on our hands. Read the whole story on page 32 and check back next issue for the latest chapter in this disturbing saga.

Narayan Pattison

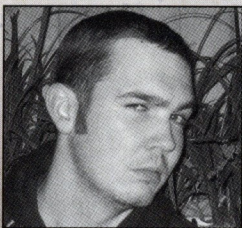
NARAYAN PATTISON
Editor

HOW WE GOT THE CASH FOR OUR PS3



TRISTAN OGILVIE

To get my cash together I decided it'd be a good idea to rob a bank, but accidentally wound up in a sperm bank instead. Funny thing was, Paul was in there making a withdrawal. Wow, talk about awkward.



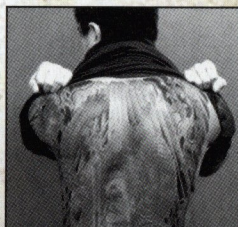
LUKE REILLY

Well, I fell into one of these great things called 'a job'. No, hear me out - you see, I get money in exchange for my services (unlike Paul, who gets 'jobs' and 'services' in exchange for his money). The moral? Get a job, buy a PS3 (and don't pay for sex).



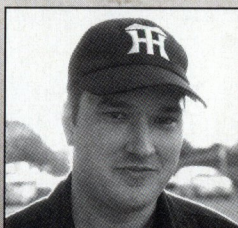
DAVE KOZICKI

My A-Z to getting cash for a PS3. Assault, Battery, Carnal knowledge, Dirty Sanchez, Fraud, Golden showers, Indecent exposure, Jury duty, Kleptomania, Lewd acts, Prostitution, Reach arounds, Streaking, Vehicle theft, Youth exploitation. Nuff said!



PHILLIP JORGE

I stood on a street corner selling pictures of myself. I sold two. For \$500 each. To the same weird guy. He said he wanted one to stick to the back of his wife's head. I have no idea what the other one's for. It's kinda freaking me out...



PAUL FREW

I tried to run a carwash like the ones with the hot bikini girls? Well I had everything but a hose so I improvised. I just wished I hadn't chowed down on that asparagus earlier in the day otherwise no one would have known and my PS3 would be paid off.



PATRICK KOLAN

\$999 isn't easy to come by. Unless you're me. Because I'm not afraid to stoop to acts of depravity and debauchery for a little extra cash. Did you know you could catch herpes through a straw? I didn't either. But I'm 34 dollars closer to my PS3. Nice.

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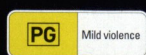
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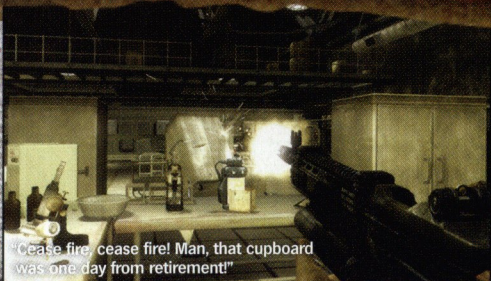
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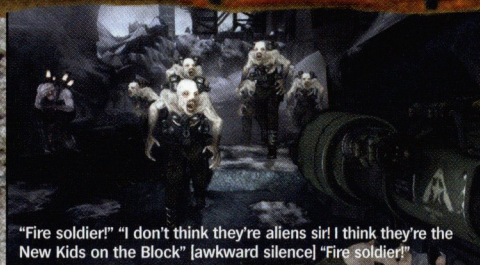
PS3

SCREENSHOT OF THE MONTH

Resistance: Fall of Man – *resistance is futile...*



"Cease fire, cease fire! Man, that cupboard was one day from retirement!"

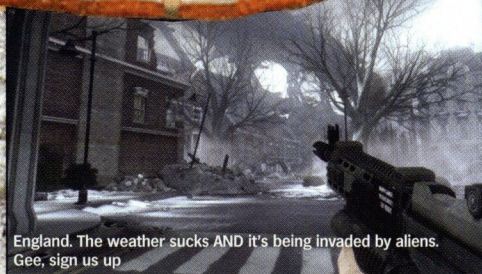


"Fire soldier!" "I don't think they're aliens sir! I think they're the New Kids on the Block" [awkward silence] "Fire soldier!"



Dating aliens. Carry a gun and be prepared to lower your standards

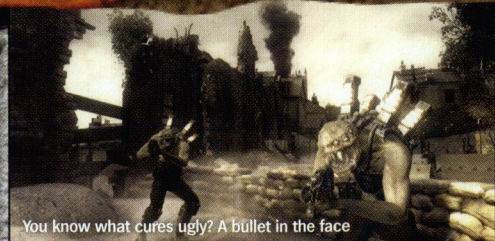
Uncovering the latest PS2, PSP and PS3 news every month



England. The weather sucks AND it's being invaded by aliens.
Gee, sign us up



He just wants to hug you (your slashed
and chewed up corpse, that is)



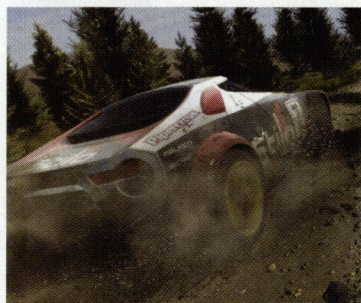
You know what cures ugly? A bullet in the face



PS3

STUCK IN THE MUD

Get the dirt on Colin McRae



When most of us think about getting dirty, it's almost impossible to not imagine a very slutty looking Christina Aguilera running around in a miniscule tartan schoolgirl skirt and a singlet, or dropping to a squat in a pair of leather chaps and little else. Now that would be an entertaining game, sure to have several "hands free" modes. A close second is

news of the upcoming next-gen release of *Colin McRae: DIRT* for PS3. Having checked out some early screens, we've got to say the graphics are looking extremely tight. Codemasters is utilising a brand new physics and damage control engine that promises a more realistic, immersive racing experience that will recognise every bump on the road, gravel spraying powerslide and bone crunching

collision. All the races you know and love will be there, as well as a bunch of off-road rallies and events. Included are vehicle specific rally championships, where you race a selection of official 2WD, 4WD, classic and RWD cars. Boasting more features and cars than Aguilera has piercings, (we know she's hiding a couple where the sun don't shine) getting dirty never looked so good. **DK**



PS3

OH, THE HORROR!

Dead, and rising

If there's one thing the PS3 could use more of, it's zombies and demons. Really, everything is better with a dose of evil undead. Clive Barker, author and filmmaker with a penchant for creepy stories and solid game partnerships, knows this and is set to deliver with *Jericho*.

In typical Barker fashion, things are looking grim for humanity. When an ancient evil surfaces way out in the middle of a remote desert,

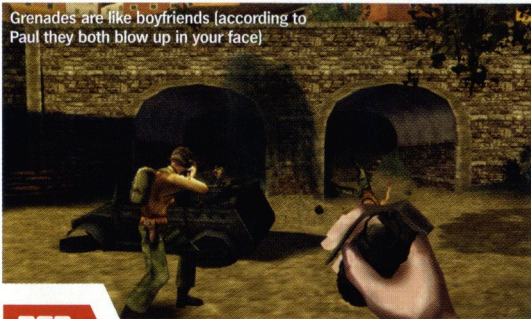
someone in a position of power hits the panic button.

As TV has taught us, ancient evil is much, much worse than young, nubile evil. It is with this understanding that a Special Forces team, skilled in the mystical arts as well as pistol-whipping, is sent in to kick some ass.

Even though *Jericho* isn't due until late in 2007, the game is already looking very tasty. Codemasters is working closely alongside Barker to ensure his nightmarish vision is translated with chilling consequence. While the story is still mostly under wraps, the emphasis is definitely on a blending of FPS action with loads of deeply unsettling atmosphere. And zombies.

All of which means, come late next year when all hell is breaking loose, you might want to consider investing in a few pairs of brown undies, y'know, just in case. **PK**

Grenades are like boyfriends (according to Paul they both blow up in your face)



PSP

HONOUR THY PSP

Nazis. We hate those guys...

Now you can overthrow Hitler while whistling Nat King Cole because *Medal of Honor* is coming exclusively to the PSP – in time for Christmas! And what's more, it's going to be a brand-spankin'-new experience.

Medal of Honor Heroes sees the return of heroes Lieutenant Jimmy Patterson, Sergeant John Baker and Lieutenant William Holt from past titles in the series. You'll explore all-new campaigns that take place at various times during WWII, while fleshing out the back story of each character's involvement in the defeat of the Nazi threat.

Toss in 32 player Wi-Fi multiplayer across six different modes, a skirmish mode for quick action and a tonne of unlockable characters and we're salivating. **PK**

PS3 // PS2 // PSP

BREAKING & ENTERING

Paid to play?

Short of selling your soul to the devil, it isn't easy to break into the gaming industry.

Thankfully, the Queensland University of Technology is offering a more legitimate option. It's introducing a new Bachelor of Games and Interactive Entertainment degree that'll give you a very serious shove in the right direction.

The course teaches design, game studies, programming and IT professional skills, with the option to specialise in animation and computational art and animation, software technologies, game design, or digital media. Whoa.

If you're curious, visit www.newit.qut.edu.au and take a squiz, or call (07) 3864 2000. Qualified game designer? Yes please. Plus, you get to keep your soul. Take that, Satan. **PK**

! INFO NUDGE

WINNERS

Winback 2: B Hudd, M Clancy, D Scott, G Browne, T Warren, K Lee, L Pearson, D Fenton, S Andres, I Yipp. **Monster Hunter:** M Peres, D Allen, O Kyle, R Baker, T Edwards, E Doddle, C Matthews, K Lyon, A Lewis, S Anderson. **Pirates:** D Briggs, J Krieg, A Minikin, K Salo, M Lill, F Nikloc, J Carroll, F Burns, A Chang, R Eddie. **James Bond:** B Chalmers, G Davis, T McFarlane, N Wooden, S Contii. Remaining winners notified by mail.

SAVED

It has finally been revealed that you'll be able to use older PlayStation memory cards with a PS3 via a special adaptor. We expected as much with Sony committed to backward compatibility, but the confirmation is very welcome. To use saved data from your old games you'll simply need to copy the save files onto a "virtual memory card within the hard disk." No word on the cost of the adaptor yet, but at least it's a good solution. Xbox 360 owners who want to play existing Xbox games on their next-gen consoles (assuming they're even supported) have to start from scratch or scrounge around for a third-party peripheral to transfer saves across.

PS3 WEBSITE

Sony has launched a PS3 website for Aussie PlayStation fans looking for a fix as the local launch edges closer and closer. The website (www.playstation.com.au/ps3) provides console specifications, an overview of some of the launch titles and explains some of the cutting-edge technologies jammed inside the PlayStation 3. Visitors to the site are encouraged to register for exclusive PS3 updates between now and the November 17 launch.



PSP

MERCURY RISING

Win Mercury Meltdown!

Pushing a blob around doesn't sound all that appealing. The guy who married Britney Spears has had to push her around ever since he knocked her up. However, *Mercury Meltdown* may just be the most fun you can have with a blob short of throwing hot dogs at Kirstie Alley. Thanks to QV Software we've got 10 copies of the brainbending puzzler to give away. To win you'll need to scour the magazine for the hidden blobs of coloured mercury and tell us how many of each you find. And no, the blobs on this page do not count. Mark your entry 'Mercury giveaway' and follow the entry instructions on page 14.





BIRD'S EYE VIEW

Did you hear about Pixar's upcoming animated feature? It's called *Bully*, and it's an irreverent, tongue-in-cheek schoolyard romp where the main character stands up to bullies, helps out a nerd or two and wins the affections of his childhood sweetheart. It's packed with classic playground archetypes like jocks and greasers and filled with atomic wedgies and noogies.

Any problems with that? No? Good.

Oh, sorry. Actually it's not a Pixar movie – it's a Rockstar game. You know Rockstar – the company that brought us *Grand Theft Auto*.

Funny how that changes everything.

Like cats backed into a corner, do-gooders worldwide have gone on the attack again – spitting and hissing. None of them have actually played it, but since when does that matter? Do you think the God-botherers picketing the premiere of *Dogma* had ever seen that? You think the mothers protesting outside KISS concerts had ever listened to an album? The facts don't matter – it's how loud you shout.

It's not a Columbine simulator as some have suggested – there are no guns. And to say it makes light of bullying is like saying *Need for Speed* makes light of speeding. It's a game – plain and simple.

The mainstream media needs to stop giving these people a voice. Who gave these people the right to boss us around? Who's the real bully here? Rockstar or the fun police?

Jessica Greene,
Games Journalist



SMACKDOWN SMACKED DOWN

PS3 SmackDown? Not yet...

All right wrestling aficionados, there's the good news and the bad news. Bad news is, *SmackDown! 07* has been canned for the PS3. The reason? Apparently it's due to a lack of development time leading up to launch.

The good news is that *SmackDown! 08* will definitely be coming to the PS3. Rest assured, the series hasn't heinously jumped ship to the 360.

After all, why settle for a rushed, belated *07* edition when you can touse with speedo-wearing men in a finely tuned, truly next-gen version? Sounds good to us. And especially to Paul. **PK**

PS2

WHAT LEGENDS ARE MADE OF

Smells like teen spirit...

If you thought the underwhelming and under-equipped *SingStar Anthems* was to be the series' last hurrah before jumping ship to the lush new pastures of PS3, think again. With *Anthems* barely out on shelves, Sony has announced a new *SingStar* will be arriving just in time for Christmas – *SingStar Legends*.

We're not ashamed to admit we're fans of the unpretentious party starter (it goes down a treat with *Guitar Hero*) but the 10-tracks-short-of-a-real-game *Anthems* was a bitter pill for *SingStar* loyalists to swallow. Check out the partial tracklist for *Legends* on the bottom of this page though – it's sounding pretty money.

No word on any Aussie content yet though. **LR**

PSP

GRABBED BY THE GHOULIES

Win Ultimate Ghosts 'n' Goblins!

Are you the kind of bloke who laughs in the face of pure evil? Someone with the reflexes of a cat and nerves of steel? A hero who can hold off the waves and waves of the horribly unholy? Do you yearn for the days where wearing protection meant covering your vitals in armour, not latex? And do you look good in printed boxer shorts? Well, stop playing with your lance-a-lot and listen up. Thanks to THQ we've got 10 copies of *Ultimate Ghosts 'n' Goblins* to give away. To prove yourself worthy, answer the following question and mark your entry 'Ghosts 'n' Goblins giveaway. See below for entry instructions.

Q: Other than ghosts and goblins, what other supernatural nasty has featured in a title from this series?

HOW TO ENTER – Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with the name of the competition you're entering in the subject line, or post your entries via snail mail to OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037 Bondi Junction, NSW 1355 with the name of the competition CLEARLY MARKED on the envelope. Include the name of the competition, your name, age, email address, contact number and, most importantly your full address and postcode! All competitions close October 10. All competitions are open to residents of Australia and New Zealand.



GET YOUR MANGA HEAD ON

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Create your own Manga style hair with gravity-defying spikes that last.
Mess your hair, Manga style.



Explosive putty
for messed up

Manga spikes



GARNIER

THE TOP 10

REASONS THAT LIFE SHOULD BE MORE LIKE VIDEOGAMES

1 WAR

Instead of thousands of soldiers dying wouldn't it be nice if two beta testers battled it out as representatives of each warring party. Isn't that what online play was developed for anyway?

2 MENAGE E TROIS

Your PS2 or PSP would never begrudge you bringing another console into your relationship for a system link, in fact, it would be encouraged.

3 SAVE POINTS

Ever wish you could take something you did or said back? No dramas. If you screw up, just load up a previous save to avoid life's pitfalls.

4 MEMORY CARDS

Never worry about forgetting that anniversary or the eventual onset of Alzheimer's.

5 SLIMLINE

Your old launch PS2 looking a bit ragged? Just upgrade to a slimmer, younger model.

6 BE THE MAN

Who wouldn't want to be the hero? Now everyone can. Shrinks would be out of work as self-confidence went through the roof.

7 DEATH

That pesky reaper won't bother you again. It's all good, as long as you've still got one guy left.

8 CHARACTER CUSTOMISATION

Want to lose weight or hankering for a nose job? Just create yourself in any image you like. Paul could even have that gender reversing procedure he's been telling us about.

9 DREAMS BECOME REALITY

Don't be constrained by physical limitations again. Fly, be a wizard, a martial arts expert, hitman - whatever.

10 GIRLS, GIRLS, GIRLS

We expect *Playboy: The Mansion* would help every guy indulge in the ultimate fantasy.



PS2

GREEN AND GOLD

Pro Evo finally does right by the Socceroos

After the debacle of elimination in the World Cup (yes, we are still sore about it and have put a hit out on that referee) and being overlooked in its previous incarnations, we were starting to think that the world was uniting against the Socceroos. Actually we were about to give Atari a red card. That was until we confirmed from Konami that the Socceroos will be included in *Pro Evolution Soccer 6*. Finally there's some justice in the world. Break out the short shorts, get your butt patting hand ready and practise those Academy Award winning falls, cause in November Australia's world domination begins! **DK**

STUFF

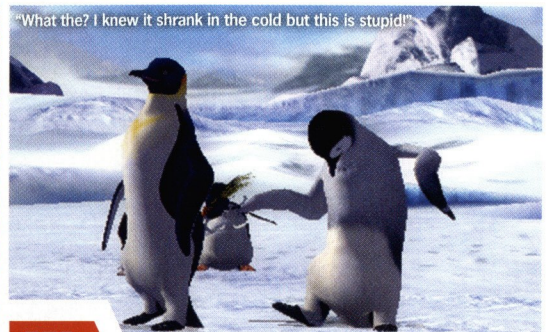
TRUMPED!

Score Top Trumps!

Whatever you're into - cars, animals, sports, movies or super heroes - Top Trumps will have a pack for you. Providing you with hours of fun and facts, cool pics and stats, Top Trumps are collectible, competitive and compulsive! We've got 10 prize packs including *Star Wars Episodes I-III*, DC Superheroes and Marvel Comic Heroes to give away. For a chance to win, answer the following question and mark your entry 'Top Trumps giveaway'. See page 14 for entry instructions.

Q: Throwing a deck of cards on the floor is otherwise known as...

- a) Texas Drop 'em
- b) Blind Hookey
- c) Cribbage
- d) 52 Pick Up

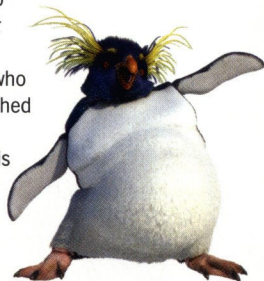


PS2

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Penguin flick marches onto PS2

George Miller's animated penguin musical, *Happy Feet*, is tipped to be THE summer blockbuster, and Midway's PS2 game will be there to help kids carry the tune home. *Happy Feet* is the story of Mumbles (Elijah Wood), the only Emperor penguin in all of Antarctica who can't sing. His croaky voice sees him banished from Emperorland and thrust into a quirky adventure where his only musical talent, his tap-dancing 'happy feet', end up saving his entire society. More on this cool movie-to-game epic next issue. **NP**



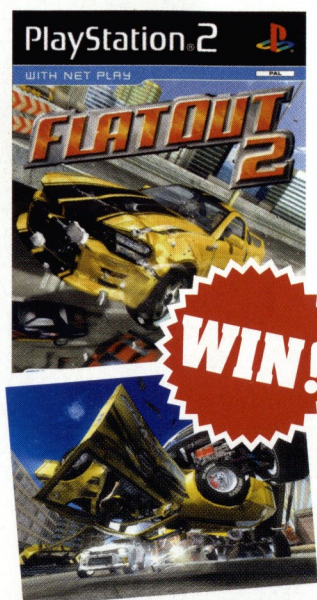
PS2

SMASH IT UP!

Win FlatOut 2!

It's official - *FlatOut 2* has joined the ranks of the PS2's best racing games. It's a must own for any self-respecting petrol head, but if the price of fuel has you tightening the purse strings, we've got the competition for you. Thanks to Red Ant we've got five copies to give away. For a chance to win one just answer the following question, mark your entry 'FlatOut 2 giveaway' and follow the entry instructions on page 14.

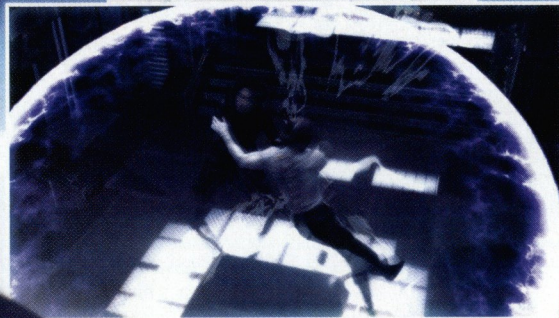
Q: Which Aussie bands feature on the FlatOut 2 soundtrack?



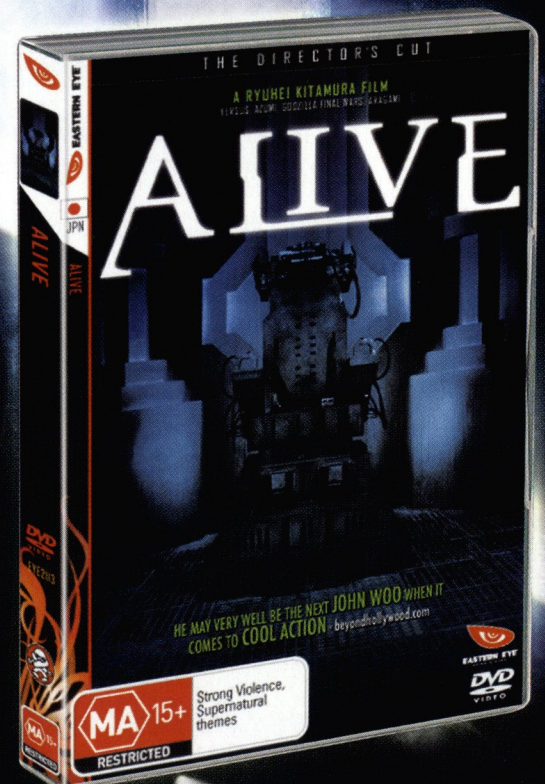
To Live a Life Worse Than Any Death...

ALIVE

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF VERSUS!

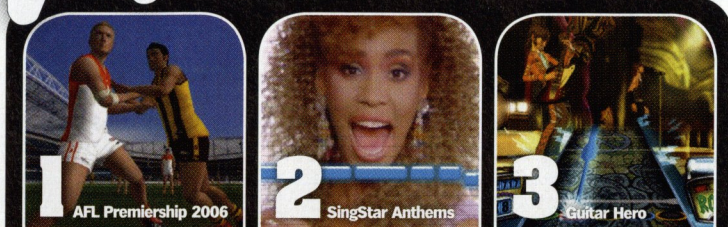


"HE MAY VERY WELL BE THE NEXT JOHN WOO WHEN IT COMES TO COOL ACTION" - beyondhollywood.com



(Japanese with English subtitles)

PS2 TOP 10 GAMES CHART



Rank	Title	Category	Distributor
1	AFL Premiership 2006		
2	SingStar Anthems		
3	Guitar Hero		
4	Cars	Racing	THQ
5	Need for Speed: Most Wanted	Racing	EA
6	SingStar Rocks!	Party	Sony
7	BUZZ!: The Big Quiz	Party	Sony
8	FIFA 06	Sports	EA
9	EyeToy: Play 3	Party	Sony
10	Rugby League 2	Sports	Tru Blu

RELEASE SCHEDULE

Format	Title	Category	Distributor
SEPTEMBER			
PSP	50 Cent: Bulletproof G-Unit Edition	Action	Vivendi
PS2	Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War	Flight	Sony
PS2	B-Boy	Dance	Sony
PSP	B-Boy	Dance	Sony
PS2	Bratz: Forever Diamondz	Kids	THQ
PSP	Gangs of London	Action	Sony
PS2	Jaws: Unleashed	Action	THQ
PS2	Justice League Heroes	Action	Atari
PSP	Justice League Heroes	Action	Atari
PS2	LEGO Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy	Action	Activision
PSP	LEGO Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy	Action	Activision
PS2	Monster House	Adventure	THQ
PS2	Splinter Cell Double Agent	Action	Ubisoft
PSP	Tekken: Dark Resurrection	Beat 'em up	Sony
PSP	Ultimate Ghosts 'n' Goblins	Platform	THQ
OCTOBER			
PS2	Bully?	Adventure	Take 2
PS2	Just Cause	Action	Atari
PS2	Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence	Action	Atari
PS2	Pro Evolution Soccer 6	Sports	Atari
PSP	Pro Evolution Soccer 6	Sports	Atari
NOVEMBER			
PS2	Need for Speed Carbon	Racing	EA
PSP	Need for Speed Carbon	Racing	EA
PS2	Call of Duty 3	FPS	Activision
PSP	Call of Duty 3	FPS	Activision
PS2	WWE SmackDown! vs. Raw 2007	Wrestling	THQ
PSP	WWE SmackDown! vs. Raw 2007	Wrestling	THQ
TBC 2006/2007			
PS2	Destroy All Humans! 2	Adventure	THQ
PS2	Durge of Cerebus: Final Fantasy VII	Action	TBC
PS2	Family Guy	Adventure	Take 2
PS2	Final Fantasy XII	RPG	Ubisoft
PS2	God of War II	Action	Sony
PS2	Guitar Hero II	Party	Activision
PSP	GUN Showdown	Action	Activision
PS2	Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	RPG	Activision
PS2	Painkiller: Hell Wars	Action	QVS
PS2	Rainbow Six Critical Hour	Action	Ubisoft
PS2	Scarface: The World is Yours	Action	Vivendi
PS2	Superman Returns	Action	EA



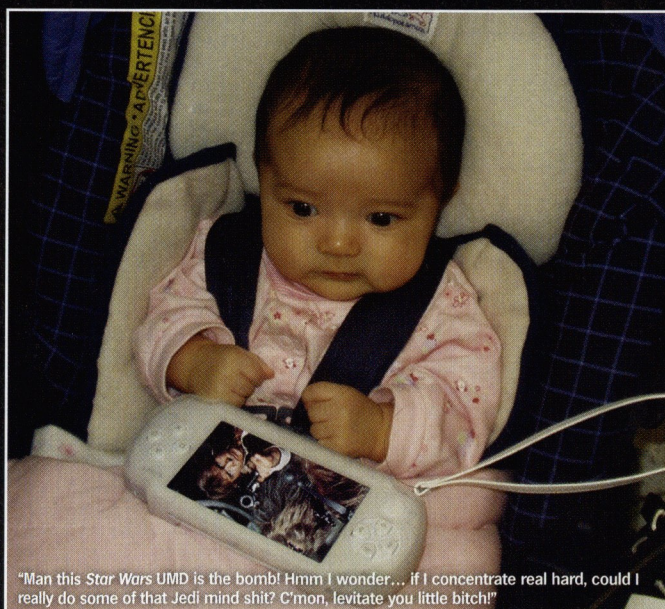
SING FOR YOUR SUPPER

Get on the mic and show us what you've got!

If you've seen *Australian Idol* then you know that there's millions and millions of wannabes out there who would kill for a chance to be the next Guy Sebastian. But put down the knife and pick up a pen because thanks to Red Ant we're giving five lucky readers the chance to become a singing superstar in their own living room with *Australian Idol Sing* on PS2. Bang out 20 Aussie tracks like *Drive*, *Wasabi* and *4ever* and then actually get judged by Marcia, Kyle and Mark. To win a copy simply tell us your coolest, or most embarrassing, karaoke caper. Mark entries as 'Australian Idol Sing giveaway' and follow the entry instructions on page 14. Have you got what it takes?

PSP WATCH

Where has Sony's portable prince been popping up lately?



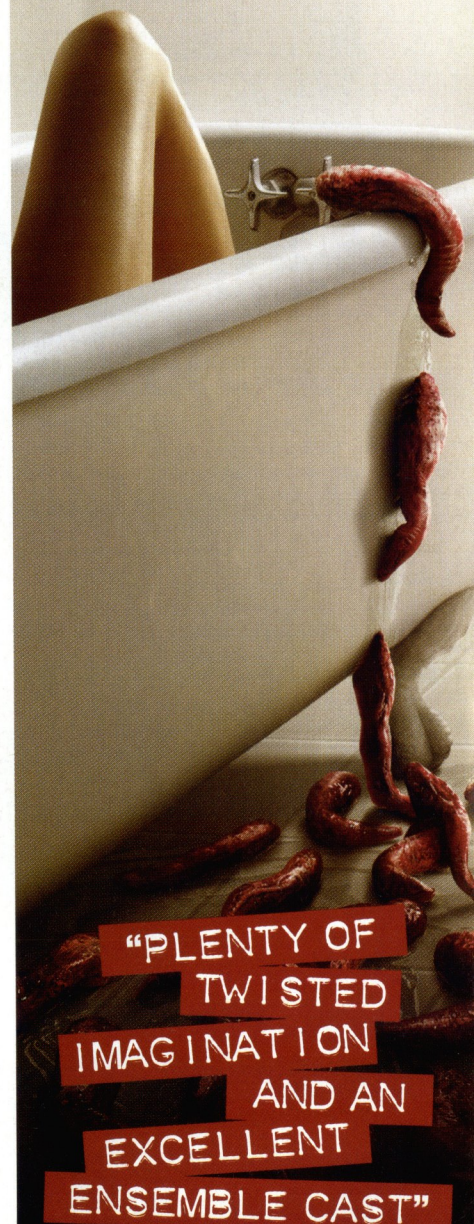
"Man this Star Wars UMD is the bomb! Hmm I wonder... if I concentrate real hard, could I really do some of that Jedi mind shit? C'mon, levitate you little bitch!"

It looks like Activision's first Bond game won't be based on *Casino Royale* after all. The next James Bond film after *Casino Royale* is being targeted for May 2008.

SLITHER

FEED THE FEAR

Starring
**NATHAN
FILLION**
(Serenity, Firefly)
**ELIZABETH
BANKS**
(The 40 Year Old Virgin,
Spider Man 2)



"PLENTY OF
TWISTED
IMAGINATION
AND AN
EXCELLENT
ENSEMBLE CAST"

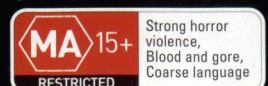
- The Movie Show

RENT OR BUY
ON DVD
SEPTEMBER 6



www.universalpictures.com.au

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DVD

SUPERSTAR

One on one with AFL's next big thing, *Strauchanie*

OPS2: How does it feel knowing, despite the fact you were last pick in the draft, that you've captured the hearts and minds of footy fans across the country?

Strauchanie: Listen, Strauchanie already had the hearts before he started in the AFL, sure it was more contained to Horsham – I mean, they love me down there. Sure, if it means there are more hearts who want a slice of Strauchanie that's great. But Strauchanie's kinda focused at the moment at getting a game and helping Collingwood win the grand final – which they won't do without Strauchanie's help. After that, sure, the ladies can line up and Strauchanie can enjoy some yum cha.

OPS2: What does it take to be an elite sportsman like yourself?

Strauchanie: Dedication, training – I mean, I train probably one and a half times a week – and just commitment to the cause. I mean, sometimes I do have to leave smorgies early to get to the Lexus Centre to train.

OPS2: Do you think being an elite sportsman is something all kids can aspire to, or just the ones that are actually good at sports?

Strauchanie: My advice to all the kids out there is do not set your sights at being as good as Strauchanie – it will not happen. Choose another player whose not as good – Tarkyn Lockyer, Shane O'Bree, Alan Didak. If your skills are a bit crap at the Auskick clinics, then probably give up. Step aside, and let the superstars come through.

OPS2: What sort of training do you do?

Strauchanie: Strauchanie used to have a thing at Horsham Primary where he was always the first in line at the canteen. The bell went and Strauchanie was there – he was quick. Sometimes I'd have a stitch by the time I got there, but I worked through it and I got there, and I earned my sausage roll roll. Which, of course, is a sausage roll, in a roll, with butter – it's bloody nice if you get a chance.

OPS2: Is your lack of on field time tactical? Is Strauchnie just too intimidating?

Strauchanie: That's a good question. Listen, Strauchanie IS intimidating. I mean, he is intimidating for Mick Malthouse, you know, he's thinking, "Should I select him? Are we ready to unleash the Strauchanie?" You know, Bucks looks at me and Bucks is intimidated. Nathan Buckley, he's not a bad player, you know? I think he's done well with what he's got. My only criticism of Nathan Buckley is I don't think he takes football seriously enough – and Strauchnie has told him that.

OPS2: We noticed you popped in to play AFL Premiership 2006 earlier this year. Are there any particular Strauchnie moves you'd like to see in future games?

Strauchanie: Yeah, I'm disappointed I didn't get the call because Strauchanie does have

plenty of moves. You know, I don't think that in the PlayStation game you should be allowed to kick goals inside 50. They should all come from the boundary line, on your left, because they're goals of the year. You can't win goal of the year kicking goals from the goal square and I don't like that PlayStation is encouraging kids that you should be kicking goals from the goal square. If you are in the goal square and you have the ball, run to the boundary and slot it back over your head.

OPS2: Anything to say to anyone who hasn't picked up your DVD yet?

Strauchanie: Just get one – I don't care how you get one. You can shoplift it if you want, Strauchanie got paid up front, so I don't care. It's a great Father's Day gift, it's great for Christmas, it's great for, whatever – Finnish Independence Day. Just get it and whack it on, enjoy yourself. And the ladies like it because it's a bit raunchy as well.

OPS2: Can Strauchanie be summed up in one word?

Strauchanie: Of course you can – superstar. If there was a bigger word than superstar it would be that, but I think at the moment we're just gonna have to settle for superstar.

OPS2: Cheers Strauchanie.

Strauchanie: No worries, I just gotta go see the medical guy 'cause I've got some osteo arthumblis from playing *Grand Theft Auto* – I gotta get that sussed out... **LR**



SCORE!

Thanks to Paramount Pictures we've got five copies of Strauchanie's new DVD *Pure B.S.* (reviewed on page 87) and five Strauchanie football cards to give away. If you want to score a prize pack just answer the following question. Mark your entry 'Strauchanie giveaway' and following the entry details on page 14.

Q: Strauchanie was named AFL football personality of the year in 2005 alongside Jason Akermanis – true or false?



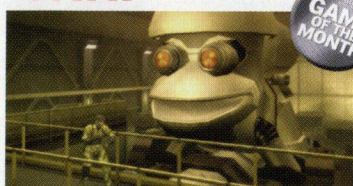
and it looks like this is when we can expect the first PS3 Bond game from Treyarch, developers of Call of Duty 3.

SPEAK TO US!

Come on, we know you guys are bursting to get involved. Share your thoughts with the nation's PlayStation 2 owners in the new, improved Feedback section and you could win this issue's Game of the Month! Write to us on paper or on a computer:

OPS2 Feedback
Derwent Howard
PO Box 1037
Bondi Junction, NSW 1355
Email: ops2@derwenthoward.com.au

WIN! MGS3: SUBSISTENCE



PlayStation 2
GAME
OF THE
MONTH

OPS2 CHART

Some games mags are written by people who don't play games very often, but not OPS2 - in fact, we play games so much here that we almost never manage to get a tan in summer! Here's what's been keeping us pasty this month.



1. FLATOUT 2

Luke is the master of this devastating racer, smashing Tristan in consecutive destruction derbies. There was a dummy flying on-screen and off [the one that Tristan spat after his 15th defeat].



2. GTA: VICE CITY STORIES

Tristan and Naz stopped by at Rockstar's Sydney office to play the soon-to-be greatest PSP game ever made. Then they stopped by a pub on the way back to OPS2 towers. They're still MIA.



3. ULTIMATE GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS

This brainmeltingly good remake reminds Naz of his childhood. Actually, so does the silky touch of women's pantyhose clinging to his calf muscles. Naz had a weird upbringing.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

With the PS3's impressive capabilities, games can only improve. My question is which genre of gaming are you tipping to improve the most? I've seen a lot of trailers and gameplay videos for various PS3 games and I would have to say the first-person shooter genre has, from what I've seen, improved immensely! All games will improve in size and graphics but I think the FPS games will show the most improvement compared to current gen. I'm willing to place a bet on this... Paul's virginity or a wheelbarrow tyre, what ever is worth the most? I love the reviews, the mag is tops. The writing skills of the staff have rubbed off on me as well. Much appreciated. Keep it up.

Blayden Watson, via email

The unprecedented power and flexibility of the Cell processor technology inside the PS3 will mean that games will make huge strides across all facets of the medium; graphics, sound, AI and physics to name a few. The brand new online service will also enable developers to broaden the experience via comprehensive online play and the delivery of extra content downloads, and the motion-sensing controller will also change the way we play. So really we don't see one genre benefiting more than the others, we see gaming taking a massive leap on PS3 whether you're playing an action, sports, racing or any other kind of game. But seeing as though we're not willing to pick any one genre, we guess you win the bet. You win Paul's virginity. No seriously, take it. He's waiting - he's already lit some scented candles and put rose petals in his sheets.

A BIT BACKWARDS

As soon as the PS3 was confirmed we all jumped up in joy to hear an early Christmas had come for us and also the best next-gen console would be coming our way. We all began speculating on what it would look like, what it would consist of in the PS3 box and everything like that. One of the features we were hoping for was backward compatibility along with photo realistic graphics, wireless controllers etc. So with backwards compatibility confirmed this means we get to play some of the most rock solid titles to ever hit the PS2. That's great because now we can play a quick deathmatch in Timesplitters or have a Takedown race with a friend for old times sake in Burnout Revenge with the fastest car you unlocked by putting in hours and hours of game time. This is with most games that we have gotten so far and unlocked special things so of course we will want to keep that data while playing it on the PS3, right? My question is where will the memory cards from the PS2 go into the PS3? Are there slots or not? Do you guys have any idea about it?

Kyle Kuhn, via email

"Do we have any idea about it?" "Do

We have any idea about it?" Hey, it's US you're talking about here... and we have absolutely no idea about it. So we clicked over to the official PS3 website and read this: "To use saved data on a PlayStation 2 memory card, you must copy the data onto a virtual memory card within the hard disk. This requires a PS2/PSone memory card adaptor to copy the data to your PLAYSTATION 3. A memory card adaptor is designed to edit, up/download game saves to and from EMS flash card or smart media card". So that's that. As for using PS2 peripherals with PS3, like your Guitar Hero controller, there doesn't appear to be any plans for official PlayStation branded adaptors at launch, but odds are that a third party peripheral manufacturer such as MadCatz or Joytech will come to the table. You've got to love third parties (provided you don't drink too much at the first two).



How to use PS2 mem cards on PS3

TIME TRAVEL

Great job on the magazine. Actually, I hope the people in 2025 will like your magazine. Not long ago my school turned 50, so the grade 6s (that's me) were in charge of the time capsule, and I was assigned the job of bringing a games magazine to store in the capsule, which is to be opened in 2025. Since I only ever buy OPS2, I donated an issue to the capsule. Anyway that's all for now. Keep up the good job.

Nicholas Jeffries, Qld

How cool is that? Thanks for including us in your time capsule, Nick. Man, we had no idea that anyone would ever do something like this! We really should start making jokes that will be funny to people in 2025. So uh, how about those robot girlfriends, huh guys? Can't live with them, can't upgrade their firmware! No? Uh, so this guy walks into a bar and says to the bartender, "How about that hole in the ozone layer?" and the bartender says "What's an ozone layer?" [awkward silence] Wow, tough crowd from the future.



Will OPS2 still be funny in 2025?

TOO REAL

I was recently reading articles in your August issue about next-gen titles such as *Call of Duty 3* and *Assassin's Creed*. After taking in all of the many positive aspects, I couldn't help but feel slightly worried. With all the talk about these next-gen games being even more realistic than current games, I am concerned that developers may begin to forget about the one crucial element that makes us want to play games: fun. Now don't get me wrong, I enjoy seeing dead bodies realistically flail around the place like rag dolls, and headshots instantly dropping an enemy as much as the next person, but I do not want the realism to go so far that one bullet hitting the player causes instant death. I want to play a videogame, not a life simulator. Hearing about health displays being absent and so forth, I really want to know where will it all end? Will we be seeing games where getting shot forces the player to act out their funeral, or a fumbled skateboarding stunt results in the player having to play out a three month hospital stint? While I am not saying the end of gaming is high, I am simply reminding everybody that while realism in gaming is



great, it should never get in the way of a bloody good time.
Jayden Leggett, Vic

Games on PS3 will certainly be far more realistic and immersive than ever before, but not to the point where they're no longer fun. There'll still be authentic military games like the *Ghost Recon* in which headshots spell instant death, but those of us who like to suspend disbelief and absorb hundreds of bullets before our character expires will still be catered for. For example, *Call of Duty 3* is stunningly realistic visually and is bereft of health bars, but it still adheres to the 'take cover to magically heal your wounds' mechanic of *COD2*. We definitely don't want to see the duller consequences of our actions, such as the funeral and hospital stays you've mentioned. Like when we take our pants off and swing them around our head in a strip club in *GTAV*, we don't want to feel the warm bite of a taser on our necks before waking up face down in a dumpster, like stupid "real life".

SCARRED FOR LIFE

As you well know, for some unknown reason, the Office of Film and Literature Classification has still not given games the R18+ rating that they desperately need (despite the fact that over 65% of Australian gamers are over 18). One recent game they've refused was *Marc*

Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure on the basis that it teaches kids how to do graffiti... As if we didn't know! So to prove this, I suggest we all go down to the OFLC's Headquarters, and spray slogans over all their property. Then they'll be forced by the cold grip of reason to see how mature us gamers are, and will introduce the R18+ rating. (Or, they can wait and see what we'll do if they'll ban *Scarface* because of the chainsaw scene. Are you with me? Yay or Nay?

Reuben 'Gummy' Hunter, WA



We're gonna have to say a firm "Nay" on that one, Reuben. It's a common misconception among gamers that the OFLC dictates the classification guidelines, but that is incorrect. The federal government decides which ratings will be used, and the OFLC just enforces them. Given the bad rap they're always copping from gamers, we're pretty sure the OFLC would be just as keen on having an R18+ classification for games as the rest of us. But until the conservative old timers in positions of power are convinced that gaming is just as much for adults as it is for kids these days, then we're going to continue to see certain games refused classification every now and then. So rather than committing an act of vandalism, a more appropriate, and mature, method of voicing your grievances would be to write a letter to your local member of parliament - if all our readers do it then they have to take notice! But don't stop writing to us - we get lonely. And would it kill you to slip some money into the envelope every once in a while?

ROSES ARE RED

The PlayStation is there through the good and bad, The release of *Driv3r* made me sad, Then came *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, Thank god it was there to save all of us, Your sweet magazine rocks, Other mags suck c*cks, My love for PlayStation is strong, Playing Xbox is wrong, When it comes to PlayStation you are better, I hope you guys publish my letter. Rock on dudes! Tommy, Tas

Poems from readers, we like to receive, Unless they're love poems, and the writer's named 'Steve'. Then it's just awkward, as we don't swing that way, Unless you mean Paul - we all know he's gay. Not gay as in happy, he's actually quite sad, When men streak at the cricket, he's actually glad. But when it comes to poetry, we're not all that great, Which is probably why this last bit doesn't rhyme.



SAY WATT?

I thoroughly enjoyed your review of *Guitar Hero*. There has been a lot of debate as to how Jimi Hendrix actually died. I watched a show ages ago about conspiracy theories. Some people think Jimi Hendrix was murdered but we all know that he died choking on his own vomit. Well, I know for a fact that he did die from choking on his own vomit. How do I know this you may ask? Well the answer is, he told me himself. One night I

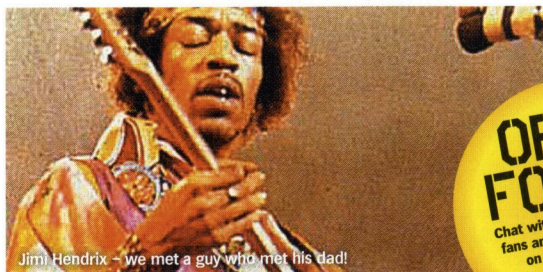
had this strange dream when heaps of dead musicians came and had a chat. I've met John Lennon and George Harrison, amongst several other famous dead celebrities. This night, Jimi Hendrix was there. He was there playing his guitar and being the generally cool dude he was. As for Tupac Shakur, he really was killed by the FBI. I saw the whole thing, albeit in a dream. And if you were wondering, I was on drugs when these things happened, but only prescription medication.

Anyway, great mag and keep up the good work.

Phillip Watt, via email

We hear you - one time Paul got so wasted that George Michael

came and started talking to him. Only it wasn't a dream; it was actually George Michael (Paul does a lot of his drinking at the Blue Oyster Bar).



Jimi Hendrix - we met a guy who met his dad!

OPS2 FORUM
Chat with other PlayStation fans and share your views on the OPS2 forum.
<http://forums.derwenthoward.com.au>

CUTTINGS

Snippets from letters that made us laugh, cry or scream

IT SHOULDN'T BE A GAME

I've got a problem with your It Should Be A Game section. Every two or so months it can practically be guaranteed that there is going to be someone who has sent in a variation of the *GTA* series. I think it would be better to create an original game like *Any Hero* from issue #52 rather than putting a new spin on *GTA*.

Matt, via email

So, what exactly are you waiting for?

EXASPERATED PSI

Do you guys know any cheats to beat that fire freak bitch in *Psi-Ops*? Even on easy difficulty I can't last during the one on one with her. Help please!

David, via email

On the main menu, highlight the 'Extra Content' option and press **△** to bring up a keypad. Then enter 456456 to get Super PSI powers. "Hey, what are you doing here? Git back on page 96!" yells our cheat wrangler.

MAN OF COLOURS

Will the PS3 come in silver, black or white, or is it only black and then they will release the other two colours afterwards like they did with PSP in white? Or are they just going to get rid of the other colours altogether? What is the difference between the 20GB PS3 and the 60GB PS3?

William Mumford, via email

The PS3 will initially be only available in black, with other colours likely to be introduced later in the console's lifespan. What's the difference between the 20GB PS3 and the 60GB PS3? About 40GB. Plus with the latter you also get HDMI output, memory stick slots and built in Wi-Fi [that's geek shorthand for wireless networking].

EXCELLENT QUESTION

You guys are very wise, so you must know the answers to many questions such as: "What is Grimace?" and "Can Grimace be killed?"

Robert Nugent, via email

Wait, do you mean that weird purple blob that hangs out with Ronald McDonald? Yeah, exactly what the hell is that thing? Whatever he is, he sure seems to be a lot more fun than the other grimace you get at McDonald's; the one when you take a bite of your Big Mac and the pickle tastes funny, only that's not a pickle... THAT'S A FREAKIN' BAND AID!

IT'S ONE LOUDER...

Thanks a lot for the review on *Guitar Hero* guys, you persuaded me to get it. My favourite song is Spanish Castle Magic. Did you know that Jimi Hendrix once got a violin bow and used it on his guitar strings in a song?

Jordan Peters, via email

That was actually Jimmy Page, from Led Zeppelin. But either way, it's still not as cool as Nigel Tufnel from Spinal Tap, who used an actual violin on his guitar strings, while playing another guitar with his foot.

CREAMED

Your magazine is the best ever - I cream myself when I get my hands on the latest mag! PS. Bag out Paul for me.

Ryan Aboddy, via email

Well, if we must. Have we told you about the time Paul had sex with a girl? We haven't? Well that's probably because it never happened.

IT SHOULD BE A GAME

If you've got a great idea for a game, email it to ops2@derwenthoward.com.au or post it to the usual address. Don't forget to create a cool looking cover. The best one each month scores a free copy of the game of the month!



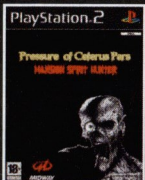
EVOLUTION

You play a spiritual being who has control over a specific species; the idea of the game is to try to make your species come out on top. You can build on a certain number of stats including speed, bulk and intelligence.

You will also need to prepare for natural occurrences like Ice ages and droughts.

Sam Bannon, SA

OPS2 says: Will Wright is one step ahead of you with *Spore*. Don't feel too bad, he ripped off our "sit around and occasionally go to the toilet idea" with *The Sims*.



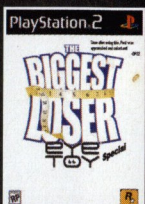
PRESSURE OF CETERUS PARS: MANSION SPIRIT HUNTER

You play as David Kanjeose, a ghost hunter. The more photographic evidence you collect, you receive higher payments and

use it to buy more ghost hunting gear as you explore more dangerous mansions, graveyards, sewers, etc.

Doug Wingate, via email

OPS2 says: Very cool idea, although the title's a little bit wordy (but then again *Ghostbusters* is already taken).



THE BIGGEST LOSER

Pretty simple, it's an EyeToy game but with a twist. Lose those rolls as you compete against others online from in front of your TV. **Blayden Watson, via email**

OPS2 says:

Videogames always get blamed for making kids fat, but this one actually makes them lose weight! The irony is delicious! As are cheeseburgers.



GTA: TARANTINO

GTA: Tarantino features all the great characters from all the Tarantino movies like Mr Blonde, Jules Winfield and of course The Bride. Play in L.A. and Tokyo and look out for Marsellus Wallace's hitmen and in Tokyo don't cross the

Crazy 88 or you'll taste the end of their steel! Fun for everyone over fifteen of course!

Toby Wolf, Tas

OPS2 says: Slick artwork, but if *Reservoir Dogs* was anything to go by we'd like to leave Tarantino's characters in the movies only.



Will we ever see *Playboy: The Mansion 2*?

PS2 R.I.P?

I just wanted to know with the new PS3 coming out, will developers stop making PS2 games like with the PSone? I like many people won't be able to afford a PS3 until the price drops and I'd hate to see no more wrestling and sport games and, most important of all, GTA games being made for PS2 and so would my friends. I've got two more questions - will *GTAIV* come out on PS2 and will there be a *Playboy: The Mansion 2*?

Michael, via email

History has shown that more than any other console manufacturer, Sony realises the importance of ongoing software support for its last console generation. The PSone enjoyed a healthy number of regular releases for a couple of years after

the PS2 came out. So while there's bugger all coming out for GameCube and the original Xbox, you can expect to see plenty of quality PS2 titles released at this Christmas, next year and beyond. *WWE SmackDown! Vs. Raw 2007* and all of the big name sports titles are still PS2 bound, along with the likes of *Call of Duty 3*, *Guitar Hero II* and *God of War II*. But we hate to break it to you; there isn't a chance in hell you'll see *GTAIV* on the PS2 - that game is going to be so amazing and complex that it just couldn't be possible with this generation of hardware. And what exactly would you do in *Playboy: The Mansion 2*? You already built the magazine empire in the first game - in the sequel you'd just become a creepy old man who wears pyjamas all day and has to pay other dudes to sleep with his five girlfriends because his body has become resistant to Viagra. No thanks.

INSIDE GAMING!

Tristan talks trouble with Jimmy Hopkins from Bully

Tristan: Hey there, Jimmy. You little scamp, you! What have you been up to? Playing a few pranks, no doubt?

Jimmy: Yeah, a few too many actually - I've been stuck in detention after school everyday this week.

Tristan: Really? Why's that?

Jimmy: Well, on Monday Stevie Jones pushed in front of me in the lunchroom line. So I had to put a few knuckle sandwiches into his breadbasket.

Tristan: Well that's fair enough. No one likes a queue jumper.

Jimmy: Then on Tuesday it was Paul O'Connor's birthday, so I made him eat a cake...

Tristan: Well, what's wrong with that? Everyone likes to eat cake on their

birthday, right? If anything you should be rewarded for such generosity.

Jimmy: ... it was a urinal cake. I held him by the ankles while he was face down in the trough. Then I gave him his birthday punches, right in the kidneys.

Tristan: Oh...

Jimmy: Then on Wednesday I gave little Sam Taylor a wedgie so fierce he actually coughed up his own underwear...

Tristan: Wow. That's pretty nasty...

Jimmy: ... on Thursday I put thumbtacks on Mr Brown's chair in my geography class. He had more studs in his backside than Molly Meldrum had throughout the entire 1980s.

Tristan: Oh great, now I've got that image in my head...

Jimmy: Then finally on Friday, I got busted for drawing during Mrs Sullivan's maths class...

Tristan: Well, that seems rather tame compared to the rest of the week. I wouldn't have thought that just drawing a picture during class would warrant a detention?

Jimmy: Yeah, except I was drawing a picture of me giving Mrs Sullivan a square rooting.

Tristan: Ah, yes. Well, I guess that gives a new meaning to the word 'doodling'. Try and stay out of trouble, Jimmy.

Jimmy: Wait a second. Aren't we going to talk about my new game, *Bully*?

Tristan: You mean the new game from Rockstar - the creators of the *Grand Theft Auto* series? There, we just did.

HE'S OBVIOUSLY A PLAYER



World Championship Poker 2 is the most highly acclaimed Poker simulation to date; competing in high-stakes international competitions, your composure and resolve will be put to the ultimate test as you risk everything to take on the best in the world!

Keep your calm, gamble like a pro... make your fortune and become one of the greats.



Proudly distributed by



Gambling references

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Pre-play

SPORTS

RICKY PONTING INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2007

Codemasters' next delivery will bowl you over

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS ■ WEB: au.codemasters.com ■ LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK ■ RELEASE DATE: MARCH 2007

We don't like *Ricky Ponting International Cricket*. Oh, no. We love it. No, really. Long lengths of wood and leather-clad balls are generally the basis of Paul's dreams (he talks in his sleep – his boyfriend told us), but we must admit that the rest of us have grown kind of partial to them too ever since we spanked our first six out into the MCG car park back when *RPIC2005* marched proudly out of the pavilion last year.

In stark contrast with EA's buggy and patience-testing attempt at realism in *Cricket 2005*, *RPIC2005* provided cricket fans with excitement from

the outset with more balls and stumps flying through the air than a group of nude trapeze artists, multiple commentary teams and game modes galore.

Which is not to say that *RPIC2005* was perfect. Its controls were accessibly simple and the gameplay was all about fun for sure, but neither could hide some of the game's more glaring faults and omissions, some of which were fundamental to Australia's favourite summer sport.

RIISING FROM THE ASHES

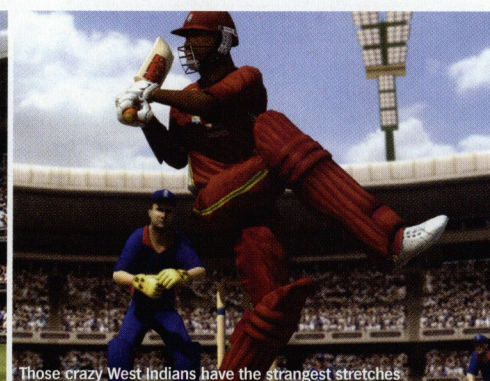
The good news is that Codemasters is firmly on the front foot in an effort to remedy all of the quirks from the previous game for its upcoming sequel, *Ricky Ponting*

International Cricket 2007. Releasing to coincide with the ICC World Cup in March 2007, *RPIC2007* is set to feature all of the official teams, players and stadia from the tournament, likewise this year's ICC Champions Trophy, along with all of the test, limited overs and classic modes from *RPIC2005*.

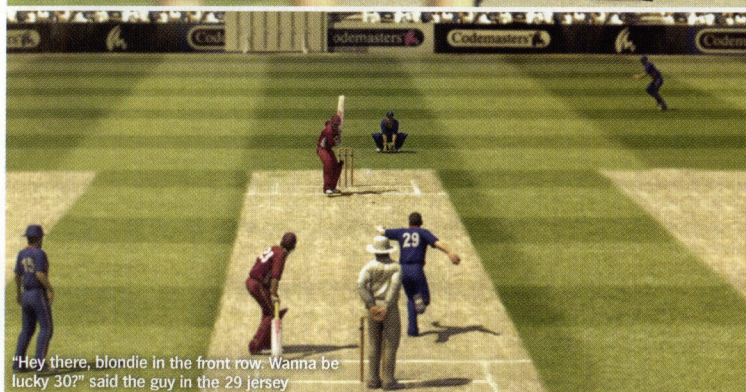
More importantly, the most obvious flaws have been fixed. When you're fielding, you can now throw to the wicketkeeper's end OR the bowler's end in order to affect a runout. When you're batting, you can now play the sweep shot to the spinners, or even leave your crease and dance down the pitch in an effort to club a boundary. But be wary – you can now also be stumped.



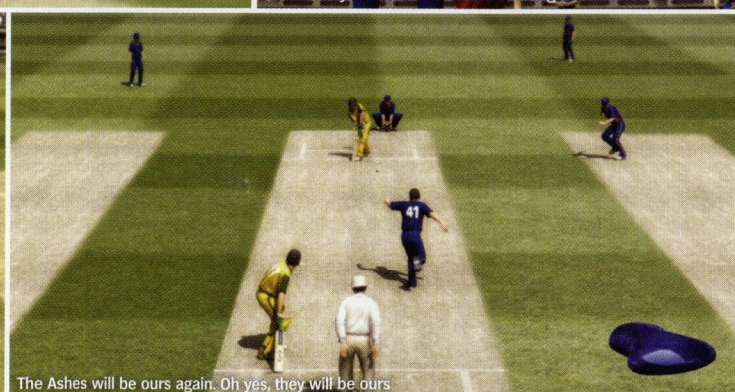
This is the new umpire crotch cam



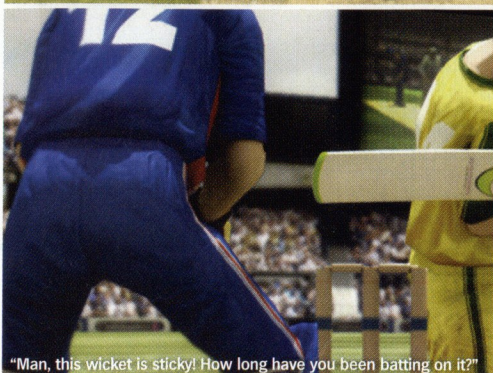
Those crazy West Indians have the strangest stretches



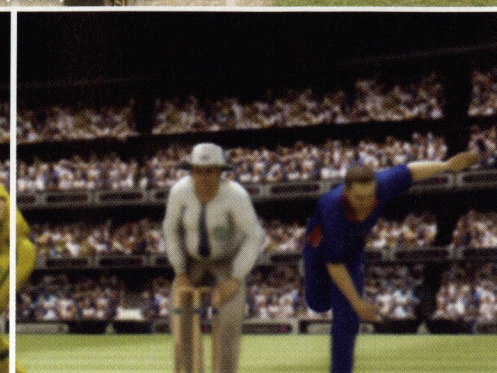
"Hey there, blonde in the front row. Wanna be lucky 30?" said the guy in the 29 jersey



The Ashes will be ours again. Oh yes, they will be ours

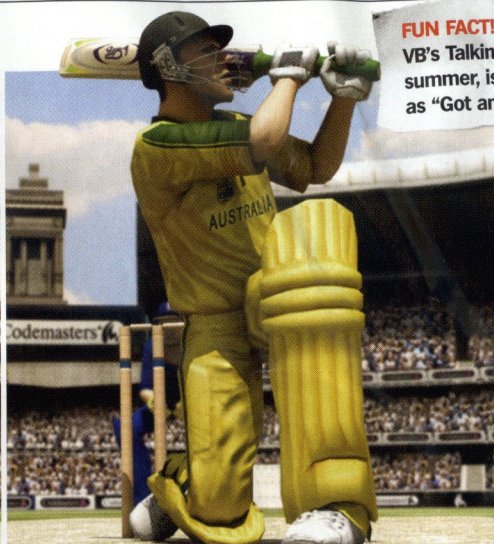


"Man, this wicket is sticky! How long have you been batting on it?"



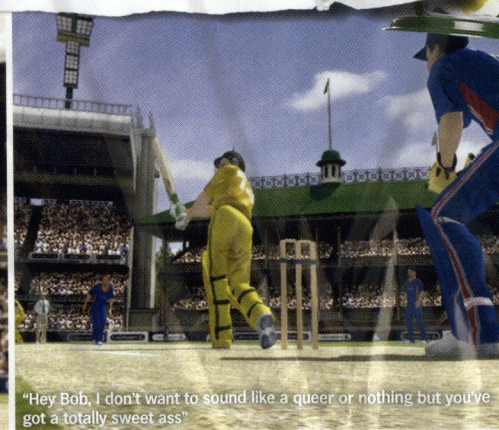


Ricky, close your legs mate – we can see your middle stump

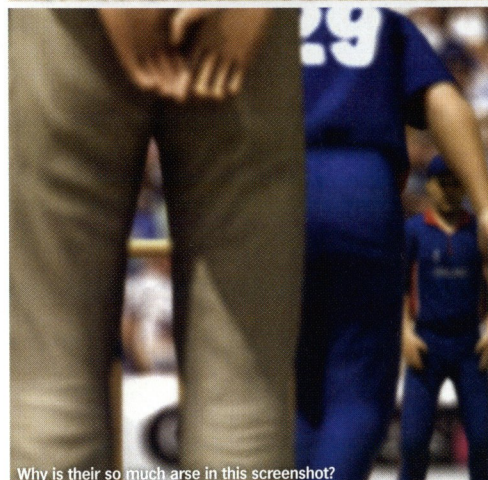


FUN FACT!

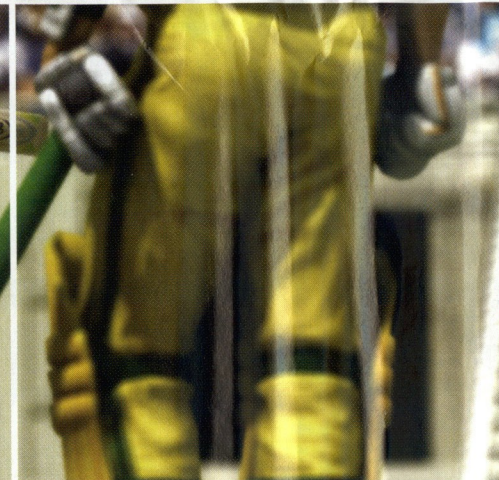
VB's Talking Boony, given away with cartons of beer last summer, is still hounding the OPS2 team with queries such as "Got any nachos? I love nachos" and "Isn't it funny that?"



"Hey Bob, I don't want to sound like a queer or nothing but you've got a totally sweet ass"



Why is there so much arse in this screenshot?



The bowling system has also been overhauled. Players will now have a more comprehensive set of delivery types, and there'll also be far more variation in both the swing and movement off the pitch from delivery to delivery and bowler to bowler. Thus masters of spin like Warney and Murali will be able to terrorise batsmen more realistically with their unique arsenals of flighted deliveries and balls that fizz and spit out of the rough, and the likes of Freddie Flintoff and Simon Jones will be able to turn on the reverse swing with the old ball and clean up the batsman's stumps, similar to what they did to each and every Australian in the 2005 Ashes. Those bastards.

Aside from the stumpings and run-out improvements, there will also be a new reflex-testing slip catch system – which is handy seeing as though Codemasters is promising "the introduction of subtle edges", presumably both through to the keeper and slips, and perhaps even onto the pads to pop up to the fielders close around the bat.

STADIUM ARCADIUUM

Naturally the visuals are receiving a spit and shine, with hundreds of real player licences being modelled in high detail and complimented with plenty of new animated facial expressions such as those during a bowler's desperate appeal or when a batsman is painfully hit in the Jatz crackers. The stadiums, most of which will be based on real world venues including all eight official World Cup grounds, will be created using Codemasters' proprietary shader technology to reflect subtle changes to the lighting dependant on the time of day and the weather.

And that's all they've said so far. But what else do they need to do? Well for starters, we'd like to see a bit more 'I'

put into the game's 'AI'. RPI2005 was brilliant with two or more players, but on your own against a computer team it was about as dull as an anecdote from Ian Chappell. The AI was just far too predictable; we'd like to see a computer team that will try and accelerate its run rate accordingly if it's chasing a big score, or one that will stick with a proactive bowling plan when it's in the field rather than just reactively plugging gaps after every ball.

We'd also like to see a heap of new classic matches, for example any of the 2005 Ashes series, the record breaking South African 438 run chase against Australia at Johannesburg earlier this year or even the one dayer against the Windies at the SCG a few years back when Bevan smashed that four off the last ball.

With the 2006 Ashes just two months away, we were as padded up and ready for action as Paul's sister's chest on a Friday night, but the news of RPI2007's arrival early next year has sent us completely cricket crazy. It sounds like Codemasters is serious in establishing its series once and for all as the only name in cricket games. Your move, EA? **Tristan Ogilvie**

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

40%

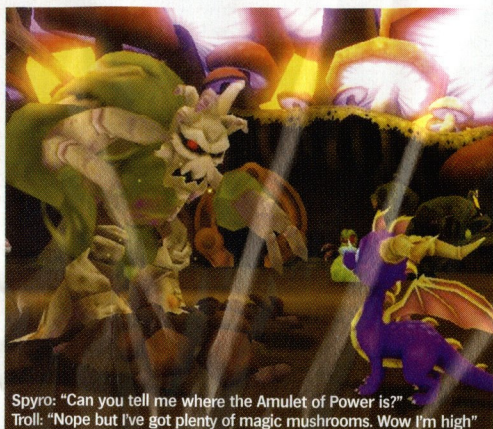
RPI2007 will have better controls, better graphics and will remedy the nagging flaws from RPI2005. If you ask us, we reckon it will be the best thing to happen to cricket since beer.

HOT STREAK

Cricket's not just about runs; it's also about nude runs. C'mon Codies, how about some streakers in RPI2007? Pitch invasions are as much a part of the game of cricket as teetering plastic towers of empty beer cups and drunken Pommie chants about Shane Warne's gut, surely they've got to be in your next game. You could blur out their rude bits to keep the game's G rating, but we're pretty sure we're not the only ones who like to look at naked chicks when we're having a bat. How about it?



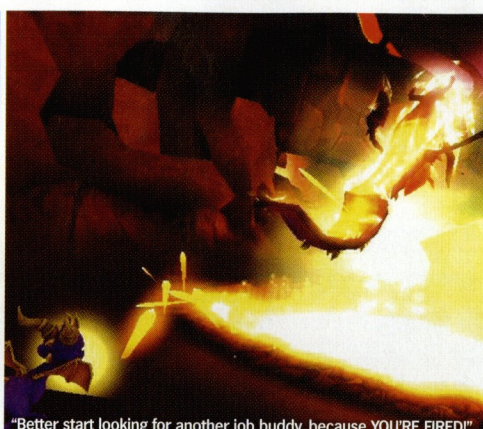
BRIAN LARA WEST INDIES
LEFT HAND BAT
DATE OF BIRTH 02/05/1969



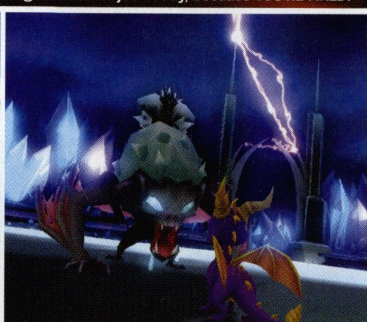
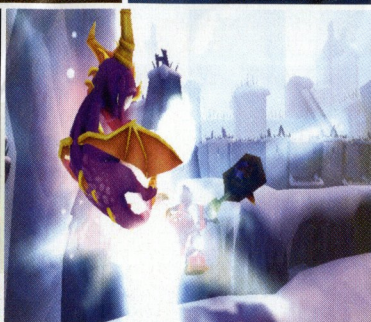
Spyro: "Can you tell me where the Amulet of Power is?"
Troll: "Nope but I've got plenty of magic mushrooms. Wow I'm high"



"Why is everyone in this place so horny?"



"Better start looking for another job buddy, because YOU'RE FIRED!"



ADVENTURE

THE LEGEND OF SPYRO

Spyro's pimping his new Krome bling

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: VIVENDI ■ DEVELOPER: KROME STUDIOS ■ WEB: www.kromestudios.com ■ LAST SEEN: OPS2 #56 ■ RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

For the first time since Vivendi bought the licence from Insomniac in the late '90s *Spyro* fans have a genuine reason to get fired up. Now in the competent hands of Aussie developer Krome Studios, *Spyro* has been taken back to his roots for a retelling of his origins (think *Batman Begins* rather than *Star Wars: Episode I*). After a string of three successful *TY the Tasmanian Tiger* titles (*TY 3* being the highest selling Aussie-made game of all time) Krome has clearly demonstrated it has the creativity and the technical skills to return *Spyro* to the forefront of adventure games.

The first challenge for Krome was how to establish a new look for *Spyro's* triumphant re-imagining. The first two *Spyro* PS2 games, which many *Spyro* purists pretend never existed, failed to evolve the series' visual style. For this reason Krome went back to the original concept art used on Insomniac's PSone classics. The team saw what Insomniac was trying to achieve with its concepts, then tempered the visions with an unusual mixture of *Warcraft's* dark character designs and Disney's timeless magic. The end result is a more mature, epic and believable *Spyro* universe.

Another major design push from Krome was to treat young gamers with the respect they deserve by creating a game that was every bit as smart and challenging as a mature adventure game. The developers were keen to illustrate that they wanted to take

the core gameplay rules back to the tough as nails classics they grew up with, like *Final Fight* and *Contra*.

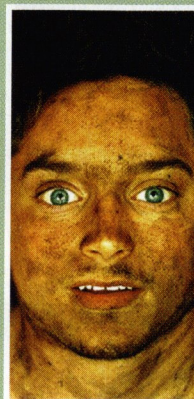
Originally the game was far too easy because it still retained the previous game's five-second invincibility period after every hit *Spyro* took. By simply removing this pointless five-second delay, the action was kept much more engaging and immediate. The dev team continued to crank the difficulty up to the point where its internal testing department was complaining bitterly that it was too tough and needed to be fixed. The team ignored the testers' complaints and was vindicated when the a focus group of kids had a blast with the game and not a single one complained about the difficulty. Checkmate, testing bitches.

Enemy AI was another area that was completely overhauled. Gone are the braindead enemies, who's only strategy involved standing on the spot and attacking when you moved within arm's length. Stronger enemies will now chase you around the map ruthlessly, while weaker ones will duck behind cover and call for backup. After crashing and burning dismally in his first two PS2 games, *Spyro's* found his wings with Krome and now the sky's the limit. **Narayan Pattison**

FUN FACT!

When *The Legend of Spyro* was shown off at E3 it looked so impressive that some journalists refused to believe it was really a PS2 game and not a next-gen title.

FRODO THE DRAGON



That's right, everyone's favourite fruity little hobbit Elijah Wood breathes new life into *Spyro* the Dragon. Obviously feeling that one Wood didn't fill out its package enough, Vivendi has also hired other Hollywood heavyweights like Gary Oldman as the Dragon Elder Ignitus and David Spade as *Spyro's* peppy sidekick Sparx. We just hope that Elijah can keep his wood in his pants and that David doesn't try to spade with Gary's oldman. This is a kids game, after all. Interestingly enough these three characters are pretty much the only classic *Spyro* characters to make it into the new game.

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

90%

THE LEGEND OF SPYRO reinvents the popular mascot with a challenging and imaginative adventure that truly pushes the PS2 to its limit.

Splitting up to save their home... Reuniting to save the world!

"This underdog series of 2D RPGs has proven that even new-school gamers can learn to love old-school gaming goodness."

- Newtype USA

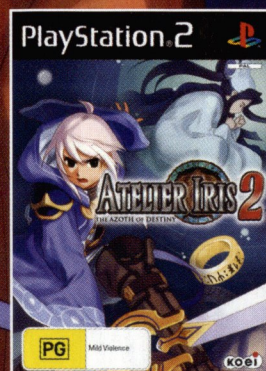
"Eternal Mana2 will be another worthy addition to any RPG fan's collection."

- GameInformer

ATELIER IRIS 2

THE AZOTH OF DESTINY

IN STORES SEPTEMBER



Feel the rush of battle with the new
Action Cost Time Battle System!



Switch main characters to experience both
Edén and Belkhyde!



Master the Art of Alchemy to create everything
you'll need from weapons to medicine!

PG

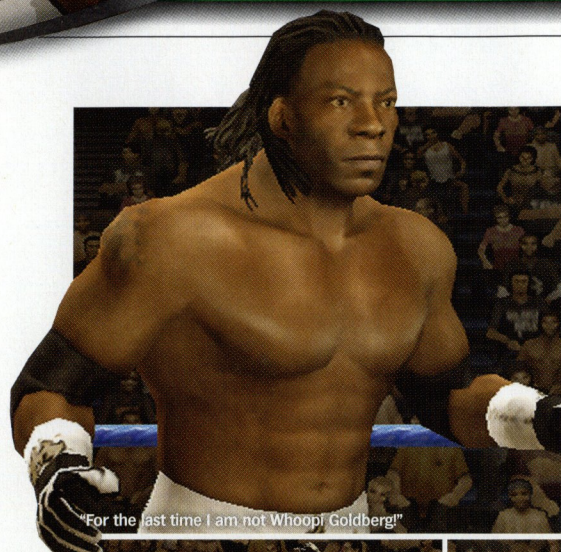
Mild violence



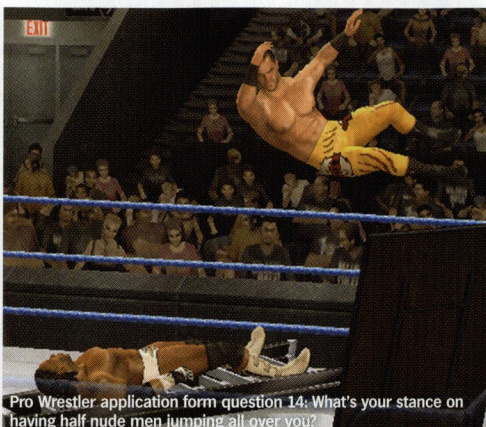
PlayStation 2



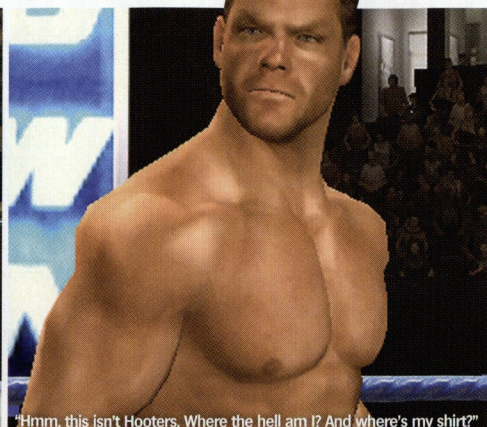
Pre-play



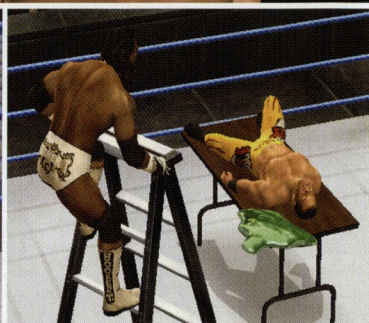
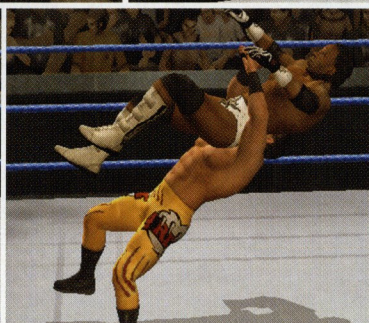
"For the last time I am not Whoopi Goldberg!"



Pro Wrestler application form question 14: What's your stance on having half nude men jumping all over you?



"Hmm, this isn't Hooters. Where the hell am I? And where's my shirt?"



X SPORTS

WWE SMACKDOWN! VS. RAW 2007

Totally money... in the bank

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1-4 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: YUKES ■ WEB: www.thq.com ■ LAST SEEN: OPS2 #55 ■ RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

The WWE has seen its fair share of classic ladder matches. The TLC matches with The Hardy Boyz, Edge and Christian and The Dudley Boyz, the infamous battle for custody papers between the late Eddie Guerrero and Rey Mysterio and of course the battle that started the classic match type with Shawn Michaels and Razor Ramon. But none of these compare to the Money in the Bank match and this year it's headlining *SmackDown! vs. Raw 2007*. Now ring the damn bell!

For those new to the wild world of wrestling, the Money in the Bank match features six contestants vying for a briefcase hoisted above the squared circle. Inside the briefcase is a contract for a title shot that can be cashed in anywhere and anytime in the next 12 months. To get your hands around the case you can use tables, ladders, chairs and anything else not nailed down.

The handling of weapons has been given an upgrade since 2006. You can now lean ladders against the ropes and run up them to launch yourself at your opponent to send them crashing into a bloody mess. You'll also be able to use the ladder to grapple with opponents. There will be four separate attacks with one allowing you to sandwich an opponent between the ladder and slam it like they're a walnut in a nutcracker.

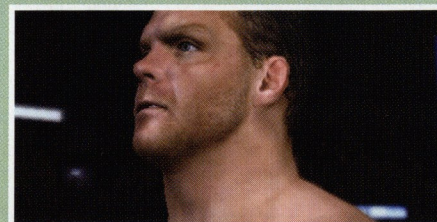
Chairs can also be folded out so you can beat up your opponent while they're taking a load off. Think a police interrogation room and you playing bad cop to get the information you need. That's how much fun beating up someone like Triple H while they're sitting down is.

Last but not least, the tables. Tables can now be stacked on top of each other and every finisher in *SmackDown! vs. Raw 2007* can be performed with the aid of one. Tables will even break differently depending on the impact.

The other difference you'll find in these types of match is removing items like the Money in the Bank briefcase from the clip. Instead of just mashing ◎ like previous *SmackDown!*s you only have to hit ◎ once. Then the left and right analogue sticks will act as your arms and you'll have to coordinate them with a little help from a ladder gauge in order to grab the goods. Lastly, all you have to do is call out the champ and lay the smackdown on his sorry arse! **Paul Frew**



ON THEIR WAY TO THE RING...



As always, THQ is keeping quiet on the roster for *SmackDown! vs. Raw 2007*. Currently announced is Rey Mysterio, Triple H, John Cena, Kurt Angle, Shelton Benjamin, Johnny Nitro, Chris Benoit and Booker T. Knowing that THQ always tries to get the current titleholders in there we should also expect Big Show, Edge, Lita and even though he's suspended for drug offences, RVD. Maybe Tristan shouldn't have given him that bag after their interview a few months ago.

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

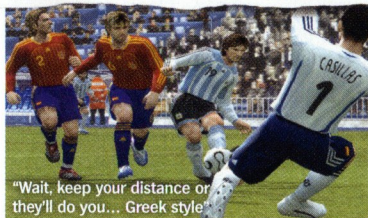
WWE SMACKDOWN! VS. RAW 2007 features a new fighting system using the analogue sticks as well as new match types like Money in the Bank.

FUN FACT!

The two Money in the Bank winners both won their title shots by beating the Professor of Thugonomics, John Cena.

FUN FACT!

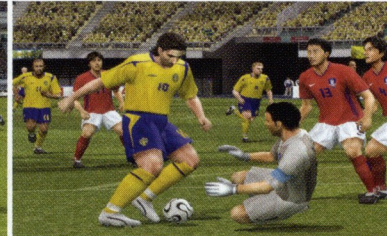
PES6 will feature more official licenses and more official kits. So Beckham will look exactly like he does now... unless he gets another new haircut.



"Wait, keep your distance or they'll do you... Greek style"



"Damn, missed him. OW, ref, my ovaries! Can we stop the game for a sec?"



X SPORTS

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

Just kicking it

FIRST LOOK PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: KONAMI ■ WEB: www.konami.com ■ LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK ■ RELEASE DATE: TBC

The World Cup may be over but soccer fever never dies down and the only prescription is a dose of *Pro Evolution Soccer 6*.

Rather than rebuild the series, Konami has once again decided let the soccer-sim evolve from *Pro Evolution Soccer 5*. Kicking off the demo we found ourselves at home with the controls but we did notice quite a few differences during the match. Players are now more responsive on and off the ball. As you dribble around the pitch looking for the open player, your team mates will point out where to pass the ball and yell out strategies as you try to decide the best course of action. There are a few new pass types like the heel pass, and

there are also several new fake dives obviously inspired by the Italian World Cup team.

On defence, defenders now adapt their game depending on your playing style. So if you run straight for the goal on your own then several players will get in your face to try to cut you off but if you pass the ball around the field then the opposition will keep off you and try to intercept your next pass.

Shots at goal are also a little tougher this time around. You now have to be perfectly on balance when taking a shot otherwise you'll knock out some hooligan in the nosebleeds. Forget about having your back to the goal and spinning to launch the

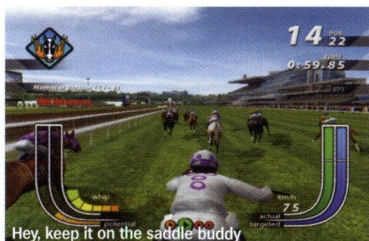
ball at the net because that won't go either.

It might be a little harder to score but it does keep with the realistic nature of the *Pro Evolution Soccer* series and that's what we're talking about. Your move EA. ♣ Paul Frew

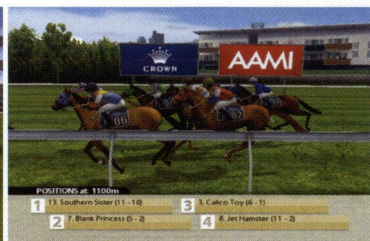
X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

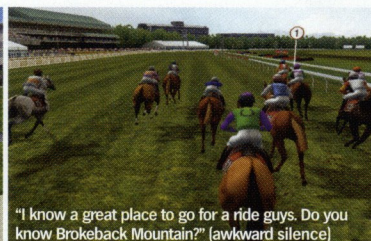
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6 continues to evolve the world class series into the most realistic soccer simulation around.



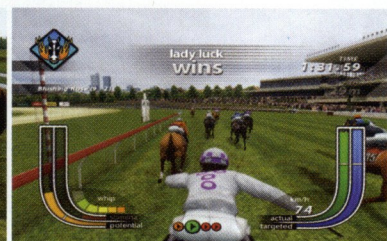
Hey, keep it on the saddle buddy



POSITIONS at 1100m
1 13 Southern Sister (11-10) 3 3 Calico Toy (8-1)
2 7 Blank Princess (5-2) 4 8 Jet Hammer (11-2)



"I know a great place to go for a ride guys. Do you know Brokeback Mountain?" (awkward silence)



X HORSE RACING SIMULATION

MELBOURNE CUP CHALLENGE

Are you chomping at the bit?

HANDS-ON PLAYERS: 1 ■ DISTRIBUTOR: TRU BLU ■ DEVELOPER: SIDHE INTERACTIVE ■ WEB: www.melbournecupchallenge.com.au ■ LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK ■ RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

They say horse racing is the sport of kings. Presumably, this makes drag racing the sport of queens. However, that's a debate for another day (and possibly another magazine). At any rate, when we think of horse racing we think of women in big hats, disappearing bookies and tiny little men whose sole job in life is to hang onto the back of a galloping horse for 90 seconds every so often. We don't think of videogames, because horse racing videogames immediately make us think of the *G1 Jockey* series – the astonishingly boring and inexplicably popular saddle-sim from Japan.

However, that could change very shortly. We were recently given a tug on the reins of *Melbourne Cup Challenge* from New Zealand based *Rugby League*

2 developer Sidhe Interactive. Unlike the distinctively Japanese *G1* series, *MCC* boasts plenty of help options and tips to make sure players aren't stuck. Of course it also includes a host of Aussie racetracks and events, making it far easier to relate to than the fruity Jap jockey games. Expect to see Flemington, Royal Randwick, Warwick Farm and more, plus real events like the AJC Derby, AAMI Golden Slipper and, naturally, the Emirates Melbourne Cup.

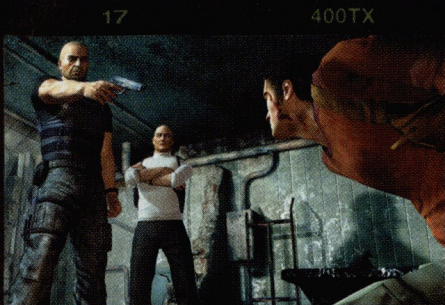
It'll feature multiple game modes ranging from straightforward racing to stable management, and even a betting party mode where you and seven mates can punt on a series of computer-generated races. It's also going to be the first horse racing simulation with commentary, ably provided by Sky Channel's Matthew Hill.

Melbourne Cup Challenge will join the always-growing number of distinctly Australian things that actually come from New Zealand – like pavlova, ANZAC biscuits, Russell Crowe and half of Crowded House. We'll have a full review in time for the race that stops a nation. ♣ Luke Reilly

X PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

85%

MELBOURNE CUP CHALLENGE won't send a rocket up most gamers' clackers, but for all you horse racing aficionados – this is the game you've been waiting for.



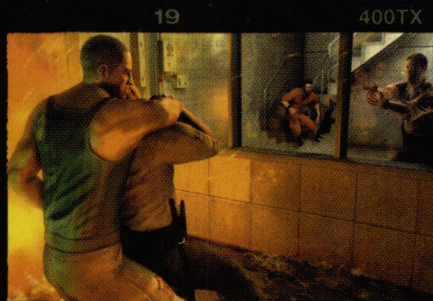
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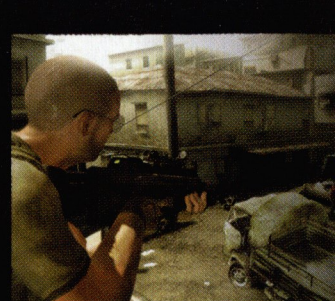
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WHICH SIDE ARE YOU FIGHTING FOR?



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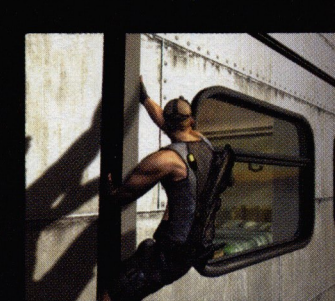
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PlayStation®2





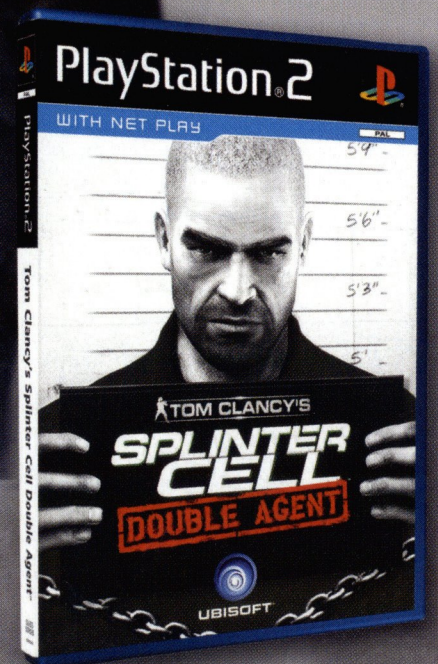
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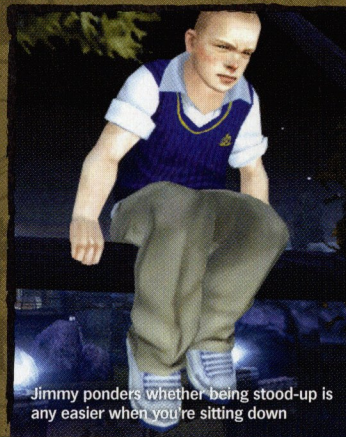
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School of Hard Knocks

Words: Narayan Pattison

Ever since its May 2005 announcement *Bully* has been surrounded by a storm of controversy. The handful of journalists around the world who have actually seen it tried to point out that your character stands up to the bullies in the game, rather than doing any bullying himself, but that didn't deter the moral minority from screaming for *Bully* to be banned. We also tried to point out that the violence in the game is very mild and that there's not one death or even a single drop of blood spilt in the game, but that didn't stop them from baying for Rockstar's blood. Despite the near final game we've just seen being one of the year's best PS2 games it sadly looks like they may have won because *Bully* is unlikely to be released in Australia.



Jimmy ponders whether being stood-up is any easier when you're sitting down



"Sorry Jimmy but I thought you were joking with that song about us sitting in a tree"

Unlike the people calling for its ban, let's take the time to find out what *Bully*'s actually all about before we start discussing whether or not you should be allowed to play it. While many will be quick to describe *Bully* as *GTA* in the schoolyard, it's a surprisingly different game. The open world and mission based-structure of *Bully* will feel instantly familiar to fans of *GTA* but you'll also immediately notice the lack of many *GTA* staples, like stealing cars, shooting guns and killing people. While *GTA*'s amoral anti-heroes often embarked on city-wide shooting sprees with police and rival gangs that had body counts in the triple figures, *Bully*'s star Jimmy Hopkins is bound by a rigid moral code that ensures he doesn't attack innocents and only forces his knuckle sandwiches down the bullies' throats.

Rebel without a cause

We're first introduced to Jimmy as he lounges in the back of his parents' Mercedes. After he was recently expelled from his last school Jimmy's mother has decided to dump him at Bullworth Academy while she jets off to Europe for her fifth honeymoon. He may only be 15 but Jimmy clearly knows how to take care of himself, as we see when he casually takes the piss out of his dim-witted step dad.

After a quick introduction to Bullworth's clueless principal, Dr. Crabblesnitch, Jimmy is challenged by the school bullies and we get our first taste of the game's combat.

Using a satisfyingly robust combat engine (that seems heavily inspired by *The Warriors*) Jimmy can lock-on to opponents, then circle around them as he blocks punches and strings meaty combos together. After grabbing an opponent Jimmy can get into some more creative combat. From a grab Jimmy can soften enemies up with a few body blows or a WWE-style running throw into nearby walls. Once his opponent is suitably weak Jimmy can finish them off with a variety of humiliation attacks. Triple-punch dead arms, wet willies, Chinese burns and the fearsome noogies were some of the finishing moves we saw Jimmy unleash.

If you're thinking noogies and wet willies are sounding about as controversial as grandma slipping a second cube of sugar into her afternoon tea, just wait because there's even more vanilla-flavoured antics to come.

Even though the violence in *Bully* is much tamer than the average PS2 title, the game goes a step further to ensure it's not teaching kids any bad habits by incorporating a tough punishment system. If a Prefect sees you thump an innocent kid, they will chase after you, tackle you and drag you off to perform monotonous punishments like mowing the football field. Believe us, after five minutes of being

behind the wheel of the 5km/h ride-on you'll think twice before doing it again.

Getting away with it

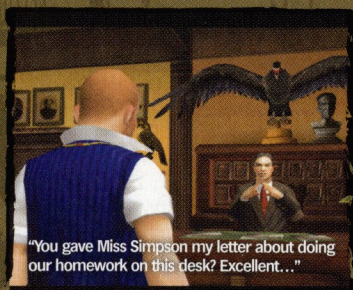
At this point you might be worried that *Bully*'s sounding more like a homework assignment for Social Studies than a PS2 game. Rockstar didn't become the world's most popular developer by making dull edutainment software, so rest assured that there's a cracking good time to be had with *Bully*. While the Prefects will do their best to catch and punish you, if you're fast enough you can give them the slip by running around a corner and diving into a garbage can or locker until they're gone. When you've got a skateboard handy you can also use it to outdistance them and escape.

If you're feeling particularly defiant you can even choose to 'resist arrest'. We saw Jimmy drop a Prefect with a devastating nutcracker punch to the groin. Attacking Prefects is always a risky move though because they'll only call more Prefects in as backup and chase you even harder.

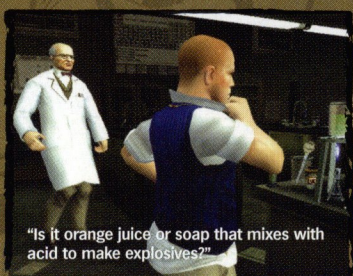
As frustrating as the Prefects are, you soon learn that they can also be used to your advantage. When you're being attacked by a couple of bullies, rather than taking them on you can wuss-out and make a dash for the nearest Prefect. If they attack you near the Prefect then they'll be the ones getting collared and dragged off for punishment. More often than not though when you get near Prefects the bullies will break off their pursuit and act casually as they wait for a better chance to get you.

School spirit

Just as you remember from school, the social structure is broken up into a handful of distinct clicks. Being based on a fictional American boarding



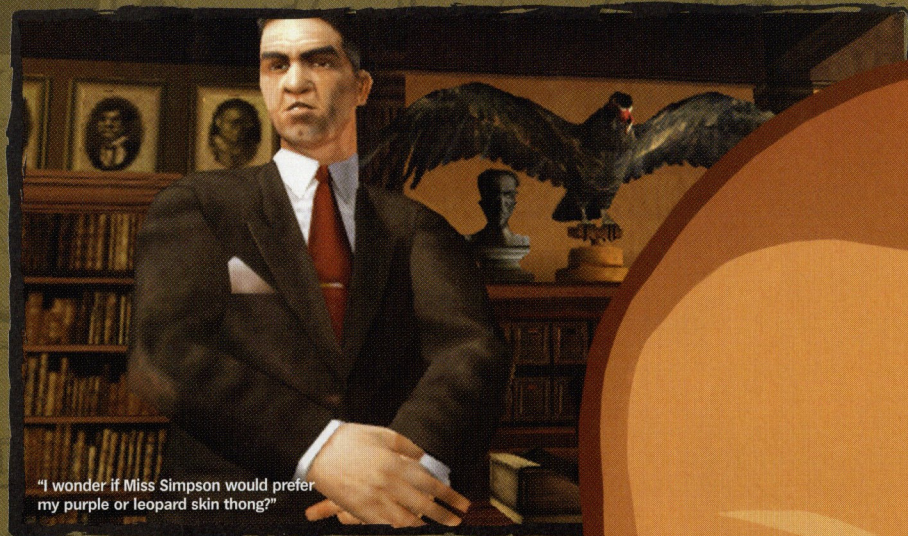
"You gave Miss Simpson my letter about doing our homework on this desk? Excellent..."



"Is it orange juice or soap that mixes with acid to make explosives?"



"Come out of the closet already, Jimmy. We saw you and Bradley in the shower"



school, the clicks in *Bully* are a bit different to those you'd find in an Aussie school but most people you remember from school will likely still fit loosely into one of these groups. In the library you'll find the nerds playing *Dungeons and Dragons*, the rich prep kids hang out in their own private dorm, the bullies tend to roam around picking fights, the greasers hang out at the auto shop and naturally the dropouts can be found outside the school grounds in the town of Bullworth.

These clicks will have a similar gameplay impact to *GTA*'s gangs. As you do a mission for one click you'll invariably tussle with another click, which will then lower your rep with that group. Any other members of a click you've wronged will attack you on sight for the remainder of that mission.

Bully goes a lot further than any other open-world game by getting rid of any repetition in its NPCs (non-playable characters) and ensuring that every NPC you see wandering around the school is a specific student with their own name, story and dialogue. Even after we'd only completed a couple of missions we were already spotting people we knew. It adds immensely to the game's atmosphere to see a kid wandering past and realise that it's

Melvin, the fat nerd with the bladder problem who paid us \$10 bucks to get his *Dungeons and Dragons* cards back from the bullies. And there's Mr. Smith, the creepy teacher we caught walking out of Bullworth's porno store. He claimed he was just checking to make sure no truant students were in there and that the stacks of magazines were for "er... research purposes".

Rebel with a mission

One of the things Rockstar does better than any other developer is cram its missions full of a constantly surprising and enjoyable variety of challenges. One minute you'll find yourself trading punches with some greasers as you attempt to rescue a nerd at the auto shop. After softening up some with your slingshot you'll notice you can throw others into garbage cans, then pick up the tin lids and score other greasers by hurling them like Frisbees. On the next mission you'll be speeding across the schoolyard on your skateboard, launching stinkbombs at the jock who's just pinched one of Melvin's *DnD* cards. To get another card off the next jock Jimmy has to trade kicks in a Roshambo contest (for anyone who's never played, it's the contest made famous in *South Park*

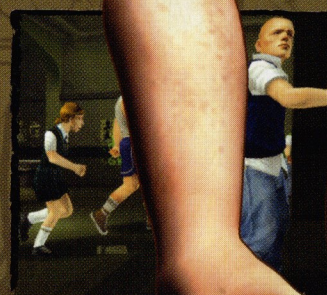
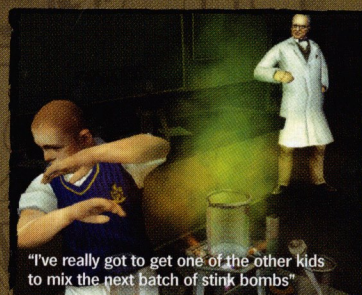
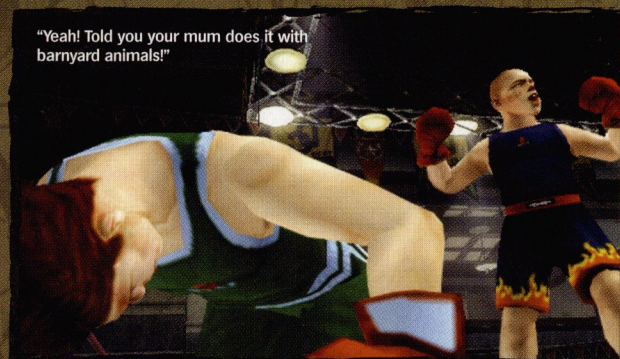
where you have to try and remain standing after the other guy kicks you in the balls as hard as he can). It's equally painful and hilarious to watch. Other missions we saw included a panty raid into the girls' dorm and a *Fight Club*-style showdown with the head bully Russell.

You could hardly have a game based in a school where you never attend any classes. Jimmy can do whatever he wants whenever he wants but there's always a real-world clock running in the background. If he goes too long without returning to his dorm to sleep then he will simply pass out. Similarly if he's truant from too many classes the teachers will come looking for him. Attending class will see you doing things like timing button presses to chemical mixing in Chemistry and rearranging letters to form as many words as possible in English. To keep the pace moving and the gameplay fun, these classes take less than a minute each and reward you with upgrades. Chemistry class can teach you how to make firecrackers and English can improve the style of your taunts or give you excuses that will have a better chance of convincing

Prefects to let you off.

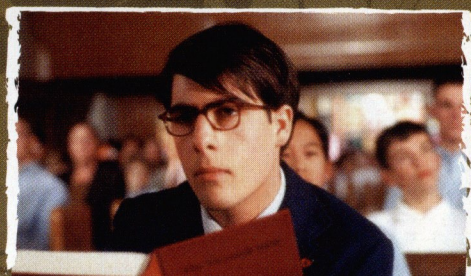
After our brief time with *Bully* we came away convinced that although it's the softest adventure Rockstar's yet done it's no less enjoyable for it and it even manages to set new benchmarks for character and humour. If you think of *GTA* as playing through a blockbuster action movie, then *Bully*'s like playing through a *Simpsons*-style sitcom. Yes it's a different genre but it's still every bit as credible and entertaining.

When you consider that *Bully*'s story will take you through the events of an entire school year (complete with changing seasons



Old School

Like most boarding schools Bullworth Academy is a deeply traditional private school. You get a sense that despite everything that's happening in the outside world, very little has changed at the school since the mid-20th century. Here are a few similarly timeless schools that may have inspired elements of *Bully*.



Rushmore

The 1998 Wes Anderson comedy sees the life of nerdy Max Fischer (president of both the Chess and Latin clubs) completely derailed when his utter lack of study skills sees him put on academic probation.



Harry Potter

Being a school for magicians, Hogwarts obviously has many unrealistic elements but even in this outlandish boarding school you will still find Harry mixing with the same groups of bullies, jocks and nerds, while tackling many similar issues.



Grange Hill

The long-running schoolyard soapie has been one of the most successful UK shows of all time. Rather than dumbing the drama down for the kids, *Grange Hill* tackled tough youth topics like drugs and teen sex.

and specifically themed holidays) and that the Bullworth Academy campus takes up only a small portion of the entire Bullworth city that you explore, you begin to get a sense of just how much *Bully* offers.

What's all the fuss about?

Considering that *Bully* is a relatively non-violent, nostalgic and light-hearted look at school life, why exactly has it been the centre of so much controversy? To understand the anti-videogame crowd calling for *Bully* to be banned you have to understand their mindset. They're predominantly people over the age of 40 who've never played a videogame in their lives and so have no understanding of them. They probably saw some ridiculous headline somewhere about "Child acts out *Mortal Kombat* fatality" and honestly believe that videogames hypnotize kids into performing the same actions. They don't believe movies have the same hypnotic effect no matter how many "Texas Chainsaw Massacre copy cat killer" headlines are flashed up in similarly dodgy publications, because they've

at least watched movies and have a better understanding of them. They certainly aren't interested in any of the evidence from scientific studies into videogames, which have overwhelmingly shown that videogames reduce violent behaviour in kids who play them. So when you understand how the anti-videogame campaigners actually see videogames is it any wonder they've been calling for *Bully* to be banned?

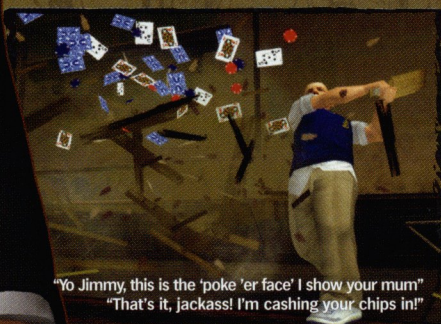
Along with drugs and youth suicide, bullying in schools is one of the most serious problems teens face. We're not surprised the 'anti-hypnotic murder simulator' crowd has latched onto a game about bullying and called for its ban. We are surprised at who's listening to them though.

Not many details have been released yet but at the time of going to print Rockstar was able to tell us that Sony Computer Entertainment Europe (SCEE) and Rockstar were unable to come to an agreement over *Bully*'s release in Europe. Since there is nothing in the actual game itself that's controversial, we're left to assume that the disagreement between SCEE and Rockstar was over the only controversial thing – it being called *Bully*. We'd guess that in an effort to appease the anti-videogame crowd SCEE asked

Rockstar to change the name and Rockstar refused. At this point, unless something changes, *Bully* will not be released in Europe. Obviously, because Australia is also a part of the same PAL territory as Europe this decision sheds considerable doubt on the Australian and New Zealand releases. Neither Rockstar nor Sony Computer Entertainment Australia were ready to comment on the matter but it doesn't look good for *Bully*'s local release.


Why can't Rockstar call it *Bully*? Why should a light-hearted game with no blood, no guns and no death be blocked from release because it's got a controversial name? Why can't videogames tackle the same important topics other media like movies and books can? Why is Rockstar vilified for being one of the few developers genuinely committed to pushing the boundaries of what's possible in videogames? Will the fact that *Bully*'s star Jimmy actually stands up to the bullies, convinces them to stop bullying and makes the school a better place even get noticed?

These are all good questions that we're sure we'll be discussing over the coming months. Check back next issue for the final word on *Bully*'s fate. **JB**



Hot wheels

Jimmy may be a mischievous 15 year-old but he hasn't learnt how to hotwire a car yet so don't expect to be stealing any cars in *Bully*. Instead you'll be tearing around the school and surrounding city streets in a range of bikes. As in *GTA: San Andreas* you can bunny hop over obstacles and impress the chicks with tricks like wheelies and 180s. The vehicle that you'll be most keen to take for a spin in *Bully* though will surely be the skateboard. All those *GTA: San Andreas* fans who grumbled about the lack of a skateboard can now enjoy weaving between classmates as they speed across the quad before popping an ollie over the fence.

A woman with long, dark, wavy hair and goggles perched on her head. She is wearing a dark blue, high-collared jacket with a row of metallic buttons at the waist. She is holding a glowing ring of fire in her right hand. The background is a fiery, orange and yellow landscape.

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If you own *Guitar Hero* you owe this guy a beer

While we're certainly counting the sleeps until the launch of the PS3, there's another gaming juggernaut set to collide with *Earth* this November. *Guitar Hero II*, the hard rocking sequel to arguably the greatest PS2 game of the past 12 months is tuning up, and we caught up with Charles Huang, chief operating officer of publisher RedOctane, to get some insight into the game's development.

OPS2: *Guitar Hero* is one of the most innovative games in recent memory. It's gone on to be a huge critical and commercial smash hit, but did it ever seem like a risk to produce it?

Charles Huang: A lot of people were certainly very sceptical of *Guitar Hero* – it's a difficult concept to sell to people until you can actually put it in their hands. But all that changed once the reviews started emerging, and we were getting such great write-ups in the press. And then when it was released in the US last year we were struggling to produce enough units to meet demand.

OPS2: We gave *Guitar Hero* a 10 out of 10,

CH: There have been some interesting hacks within the fan community; people have written programs for the PC that allows you to plug in your SG controller and create your music. We've even had talks with Gibson Guitars about making a full sized guitar controller with more fret buttons, so it's something that we're always exploring. But to this day we still haven't come up with the ideal way to incorporate improvising into *Guitar Hero*. We're working on it.

OPS2: What about the career mode in *Guitar Hero II*? Will it be deeper than in the original?

CH: The career mode is indeed expanded in *Guitar Hero II*; there'll be much more details

SYMPHONY OF DE



"Soooo... who wants to come up on stage and adjust my G-string for me?"

and beyond adding extra songs we didn't really feel there was much you needed to improve on. So how have you gone about making a sequel to top it?

CH: More songs, more modes and more guitar. So obviously there's a brand new soundtrack that's bigger than the previous game, and it's also of a higher quality because now we can actually take the original *Guitar Hero* to the bands and show them exactly how their songs will be used, so it's easier to convince them to allow us to use their songs. We've also got plenty of extra modes; there's co-op with separate instruments, and the 'Shred School', which is a practise mode that lets you slow down certain passages of a song such as a solo in order to make it easier to learn them. Finally, we've got more guitar; that is lead and rhythm or bass parts for each song, and three button chords.

OPS2: Given that there's only five fret buttons on the SG controller, would you consider it feasible to integrate the ability to improvise during a lead break?

in the stories. There's also a couple of new venues, artist endorsements and three new characters; Rockabilly, Heavy Metal and Rocker Girl. So the career mode will be more robust than it was in the original game, and we still have a few ideas for how we can increase the realism of the road travelled by unsigned artists to rock stardom. But we've definitely placed a heavier emphasis on the multiplayer aspects, based on user feedback we're definitely aware that *Guitar Hero* has become a much more popular multiplayer game than we originally intended it to be.

OPS2: How do you select the tracks themselves? Are there certain tracks that despite being great songs, just don't work as *Guitar Hero* songs?

CH: Everybody tends to have their favourite song from certain artists – their favourite AC/DC song, their favourite Metallica song, and so on. But what we try to do is listen to a broad selection of tracks from each artist, and then try and pinpoint which song is going to be more fun to play. For example, a lot of people really love Black Sabbath's

'Paranoid' and it's an amazing song, but it's actually pretty boring to play. So that's why some of the songs we have might not be the most famous or popular from that particular artist, but they're the songs that play the best in *Guitar Hero*.

OPS2: Speaking of AC/DC; will we be able to live out our Angus Young fantasies in *Guitar Hero II*? Or will any other Aussie artists be included, such as the so-hot-right-now Wolfmother?

CH: AC/DC are definitely high up on our hit list. We've pitched the idea to them several times, but we haven't been able to work out anything yet. But we're definitely trying to get a more international flavour this time. The original game consisted of predominately North American and British bands, but for

the sequel we're definitely trying to get some Aussie bands and some bands from other territories, but nothing's confirmed yet.

OPS2: During the development of the original *Guitar Hero* there was talk of a wah-pedal attachment. Is it possible that add-ons like this will see the light of day?

CH: Not for *Guitar Hero II*, unfortunately. But the wah-pedal still remains a possibility for next-gen. We're always looking for ways to add to the authenticity of being an actual guitar hero, and in particular it's a challenge for us to stay ahead of the expert players. So for *Guitar Hero II* we've ramped up the difficulty of the expert mode. So adding pedals to the next-gen of *Guitar Hero*

could definitely make it more authentic and challenging.

OPS2: Will the *Guitar Hero* franchise go down the same road as *SingStar*, with *Guitar Hero Metal*, *Guitar Hero Country* and so on?

CH: We are looking at taking a similar path to the *SingStar* series for PS2 with different genres of music. But PS3 offers up a lot of interesting possibilities with downloadable songs – we wouldn't necessarily have to put out 40 or 50 songs at a time in order to introduce new music to the fans, we could do it incrementally online.

OPS2: Since the success of the original game, have you had artists or bands actually approach you trying to get their songs into your games?

CH: Yes, we've had a lot of bands that have come to us this time instead of vice versa. We've been surprised how far out the *Guitar Hero* phenomenon has reached. We pitch the game to artists as being a game strictly about their music; it isn't in the background like in a racing game or something, their music is front and centre. The game is essentially giving players the feeling that they actually are Eric Clapton, or Brian May, or whoever. And most musicians really dig that idea and want to be a part of it. I think it's the reason we were able to get Jimi Hendrix's 'Spanish Castle Magic' into the first game – that's the only time a Jimi Hendrix track has been approved by his family for use in a videogame, so it was definitely an honour for us. ♪

STRUCTION



FACE OF SPADES

Anybody can learn to play the guitar, but it takes a special kind of talent to affect a truly rocking guitar face. Ideally you'd save one of these puppies up in a song and unleash it with the most squealing note in your solo, but be careful – many guitarists have died (on stage at least) trying to pull these off.



THE 'BLOW-UP DOLL'

Also known as the 'Lewinsky', this guitar face was perfected by Angus Young from AC/DC. To pull it off, just pretend you're Paul and you want to make a great first impression on some sailor you just met...



THE 'SOMETHING STINKS'

The late Stevie Ray Vaughan was a master of the guitar face. For this technique, it helps to practise over a pile of either dirty socks or fresh dog shit. Or both.



THE 'BLOODY AWESOME'

Bass players can still give good guitar face, and Gene Simmons from KISS is one of the all time greats. It helps to have a tongue the size of a boogie board, and watching an episode of Big Brother before you perform should be enough to make you spit blood.



THE 'STUNNED AND AMAZED'

Used to amazing effect by blues legend BB King. Just affect a look of completely surprised joy, like not even you can believe how awesome you are.



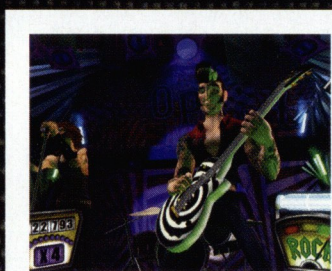
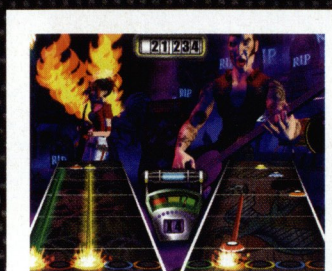
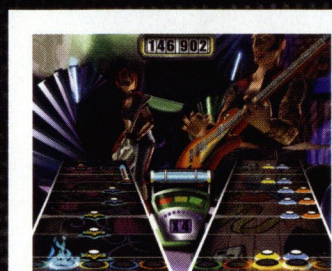
THE 'COMATOSE'

Pearl Jam's Mike McCready is apparently a narcoleptic. To imitate his technique, try playing along with a Coldplay album. That should be enough to make you nod off.



THE 'PHILL'

Sadly, the true powers of a guitar face genius like OPS2's art director Phill cannot be taught. He calls this sucker his 'Squeal of Approval'.

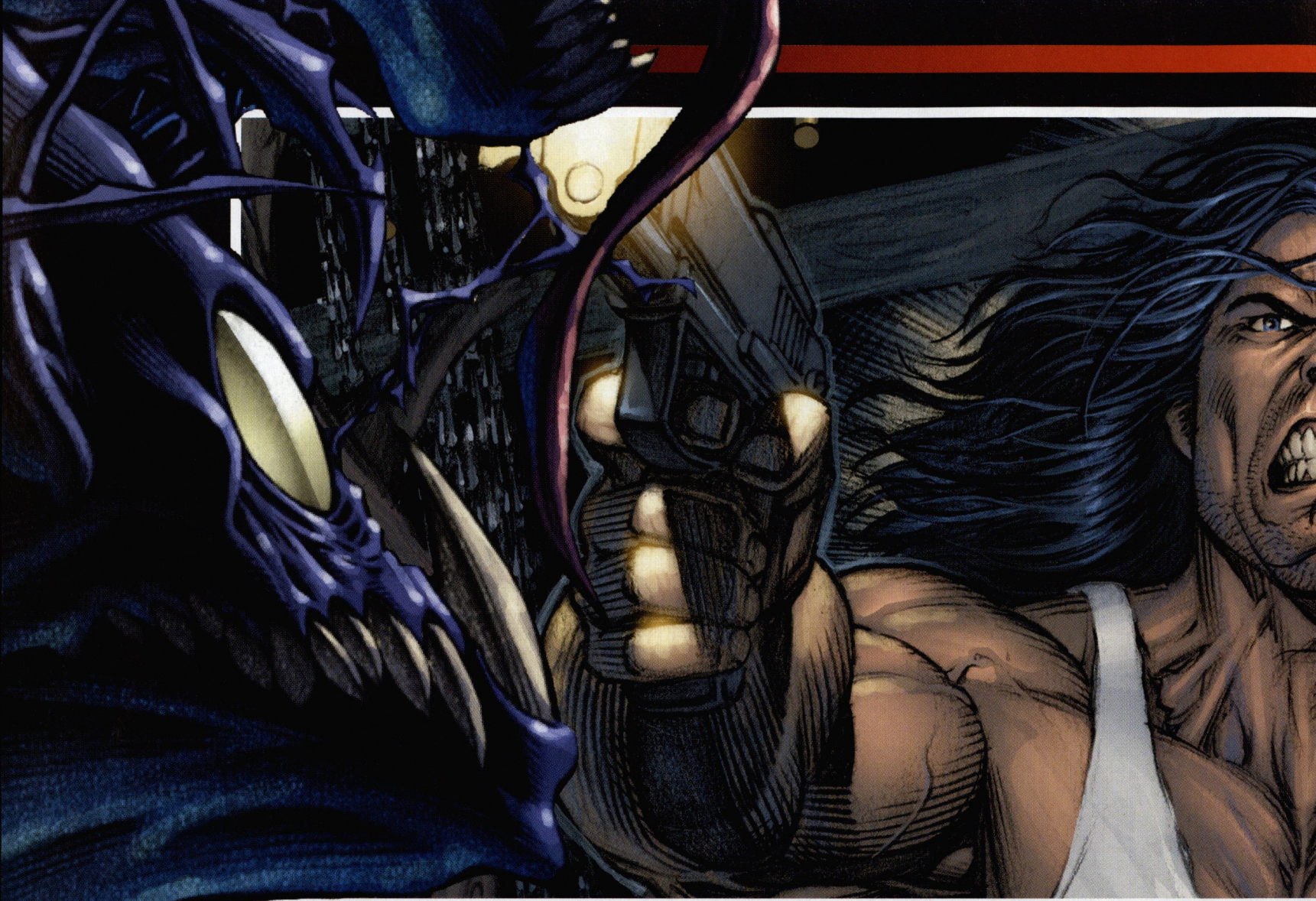


THE SONGS SO FAR...

Guitar Hero II is set to feature 40 licensed classics from rock's greatest bands, plus around 20 unlockable tunes from upcoming acts. Here are the songs confirmed so far.

- Stone Temple Pilots – 'Trippin' on a Hole in a Paper Heart'
- Black Sabbath – 'War Pigs'
- Reverend Horton Heat – 'Psychobilly Freakout'
- Anthrax – 'Madhouse'
- Butthole Surfers – 'Who Was in My Room Last Night?'
- Van Halen – 'You Really Got Me'
- Mötley Crüe – 'Shout at the Devil'
- KISS – 'Strutter'
- Dris* – 'Arterial Black'
- Rush – 'YYZ'

Dris features Marcus Henderson, the guitar virtuoso who played on 20 of the 30 tracks in the original GH and is also set to contribute to GHIII.



WORDS: DAVE KOZICKI

UNLEASH HELL

IMAGINE IF MARIO PUZZO, CLIVE BARKER AND H.R. GIGER HAD A BASTARD LOVE CHILD. PART HIT MAN, PART HELL RAISER, ALL BADASS, NEATLY WRAPPED UP IN ONE OF GIGER'S TRADEMARK OTHER WORLDLY LITTLE PACKAGES. AKA JACKIE ESTACADO, AKA "THE DARKNESS".

Remember back to when you were a little kid. It was late at night and you were alone in your bedroom. Something wakes you from your contented slumber. Must be dreaming you think, and you try to get back to sleep. There it goes again. You're starting to get more than a little unnerved. You scamper into your parent's bedroom, wake your dad assuring him that there is some kind of beastie hiding in your room. After surveying the scene, checking the closet and

under the bed, he assures you, you were just imagining things. It was just the wind or a shadow. He was wrong. Dead wrong. There are all manner of creatures that inhabit the darkness and go bump in the night. Boogeymen, vampires, creepy crawlies (not the pool cleaners, though there is something eerie about them) and Paul's sister are all lurking in the shadows, but they are a mere preview of what's to come. There is something else out there staking claim to the night. Something bigger, badder, more evil and sinister than you could ever possibly imagine. Something that makes your

nightmares seem like nursery rhymes. You were right to be afraid of the dark. Now prepare to be terrified.

Darkness. It seeps into every aspect of our lives. Even at noon in Vegas in the middle of the desert, it is present, amongst the shade cast by a cactus, or concealed under a rock. It affects us subtly, in the deeds and hearts of men, twisting and blackening their souls. Some are more susceptible to its lure and charms, while others fight against it, and rally support to their cause. Yet there are others still. Some who the darkness knows intimately and has a purpose and hunger for. Someone who was destined to be a vehicle of tremendous power, regardless of his wants or desires. Poor bastard.

"No I can't 'open any wider'. Time for you to eat lead, stupid dentist!"



MANIFEST DESTINY

What is The Darkness, you may be asking yourself. The Darkness, for lack of a better word, is pure evil. Nasty, dirty, violent, sentient evil. Plain and simple. Yet it has one weakness. It cannot manifest unless it has a host. A cursed vessel groomed from birth for the Darkness to take as it's own. Cue our hero... err... anti-hero, Jackie Estacado. Orphaned, abandoned as an infant and placed in the care of the Franchetti Crime Family, blissfully ignorant to the power resonating within him. Raised as one of mob boss Paulie Franchetti's own (think Tony Soprano only significantly more twisted) he quickly rises through the ranks to made man. Feared and respected, he never met a hit he didn't like, a girl he couldn't bed or a problem he couldn't solve. Until his 21st birthday, that is. That's where it gets interesting. But hold up... wait a minute. Isn't this based on a comic? Aren't comics and games just for kids? Answer... hell no they aren't, on both counts. Comics and games have grown up, and two big reasons, in this instance, are the creators of *The Darkness*, Marc Silvestri and Garth Ennis.

HEARTS OF DARKNESS

When originally launched in 1996, *The Darkness* was a bit of an anomaly. Most comics were dealing with your usual superhero type scenarios, though some on the fringe were tackling subjects from other

dimensions. You know, demons and devils and what not. The unlikely partnership of supremely talented artist/writer Marc Silvestri, whose works include *Uncanny X-Men*, *Wolverine*, *Cyber Force* and the newer *Evo*, and the incredibly warped penmanship of Ireland's Garth Ennis, who cut his teeth on *2000 AD*, *Judge Dredd* and the nigh-revolutionary *Preacher*, was indeed a match made in heaven. Silvestri's sharp visuals mixed with Ennis' cracking wit and disturbing perspective and fascination with Mafia life took a pubescent medium and catapulted it into the adult stratosphere, and it hasn't looked back since.

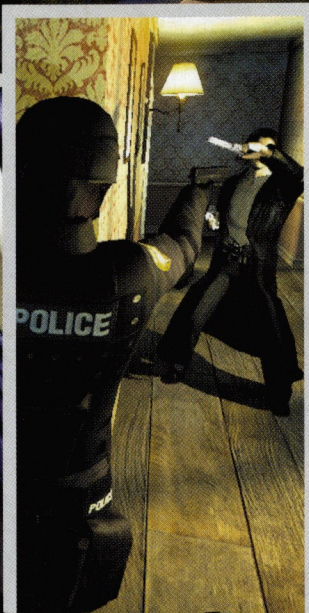
When the series reached its zenith, they chose to finish on a high rather than languish into obscurity. Enter visionary Dale Keown (see DARK CHILD) and Eisner Award winning writer Paul Jenkins. Jenkins' run on *Hellblazer* had brought him to the industries' attention, and after a lash at the popular *Witchblade*, it seemed that working on *The Darkness* was a logical progression. (*Witchblade* and *The Darkness* are counterpoints, ying to each other's yang) What no one was prepared for was what transpired when *The Darkness: Mark II* hit newsstands. Though dealing with an intense, surreal and shockingly violent subject matter, it brought a

DARK CHILD

Current artist Dale Keown has had a long career in comics, spanning nearly 20 years, with many of his impressive works gracing these pages. After starting on several obscure titles, he began working on *The Incredible Hulk*, which put his star on the rise. He then hit the big time with *The Darkness*. His distinct, detailed style revealed an extreme sense of malevolence not seen before, as he pencilled the intense and confronting visions of Jackie and his darkling cohorts. He really pushed the boundaries, and was definitely a huge influence on the overall look of the game.



"You're cancelled, Rove!"



"Hey officer, check this out. I can do a kick-ass Neo impression"

surprising amount of depth and human emotion to the fold, and was an instant hit. Not resting on their laurels Silvestri and Jenkins began working on a multi-media assault that kicks off with the game itself. For once, it's looking like a comic adaptation that will only suck the life out of your enemies, and not just plain suck.

Now many of you are probably thinking that we've been down this road before. So many comics are immortalised as games, yet a scant few deserve to live forever. Most should be buried on sight. Rest easy as we tell you that it's all good. Paul Jenkins, you know, the dude who writes the thing, has penned the story for the game, and while it doesn't incorporate every single solitary aspect of the comic, it comes pretty darn close. For those non-believers out there, we had a brief chat with him to get the low-down on Jackie, his mindset, powers and any other points of interest he felt like bringing up.

Giving us some insight into elements of the comics that simply had to be in the game, Jenkins explained "Jackie Estacado is an amazing character - I am not talking about the Darkness powers so much as the man behind them. The Mob is like a very dysfunctional family, and Jackie's doing all that he can to keep it together. He believes in the old way of doing things - he's kind of a romantic, while his enemies within the Mob are realists. It's easy to like Jackie, I think... you feel for the guy as you're ripping people's heads off."

You might have already heard a little about *The Darkness*' 'Other Realm'. According to Jenkins it's "an extension of the mind of the Darkness. It is a very strange place, populated by demon soldiers who are constantly at war with each other - in fact, the setting is the trenches of the First World War. Here,

Jackie comes upon the origin of the Darkness... the creature seems to thrive upon the human misery and the suffering endured by so many men in that setting. It's a great way of varying things up in the game. How often do you get to do crime fiction and then mix it up running through the trenches during the most devastating conflict in human history?"

When asked if Jackie's powers will eventually take him over as they evolve, Jenkins said "this is a pretty neat part of how Jackie evolves during the game. Like any kind of combat game, his weaponry gets stronger and more powerful as the game progresses. There are some neat and innovative powers that players will discover as they play through the game. Unlike other games, however, acquiring new powers and weapons will also take its toll on you in some ways. You always pay for using demonic powers, I guess."

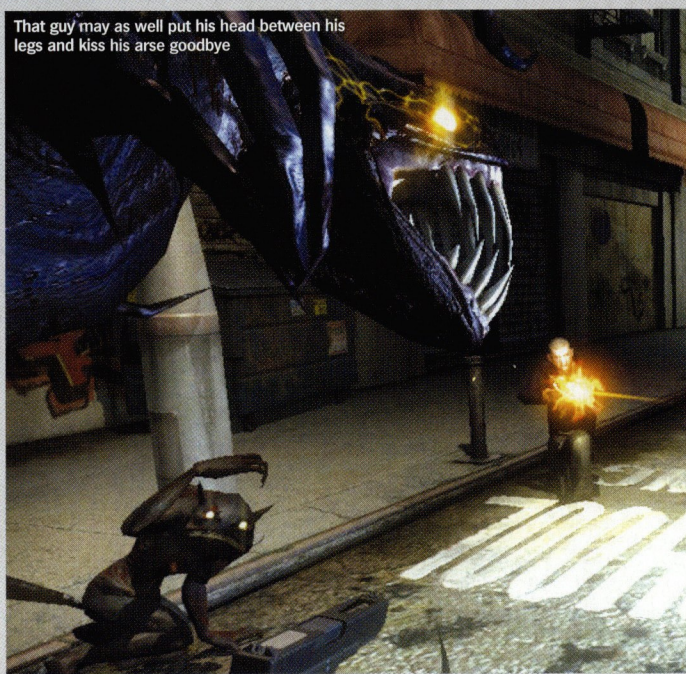
We know exactly what he means. We're still making payments to that voodoo witchdoctor for putting the kibosh on the Xbox 360 until the PS3 is launched in November. Not that we really needed too, but we thought it would be fun just for the heck of it.

So there you have it, all the background you needed to know about the game. What's that? How's it play? How's it look? Don't worry. We've got the goods on the first few levels. It's the perfect jump off point, just like a teaser trailer for a movie...

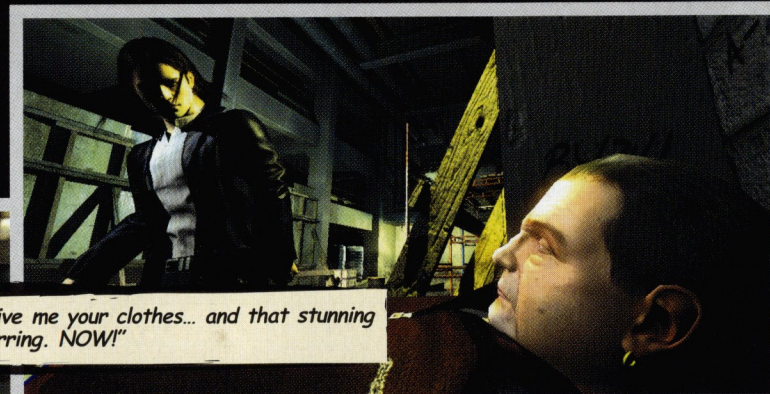
THE POWER OF THE DARKSIDE

As the game begins we join Jackie as he groggily awakens in the back seat of a car in the middle of a high-speed pursuit. Unfortunately, Jackie and his mafiosos (Nino and Mikey) are the focus of all the

That guy may as well put his head between his legs and kiss his arse goodbye



"Give me your clothes... and that stunning earring. NOW!"



BASED ON THE BESTSELLING ALEX RIDER NOVEL

YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG TO DIE.

STORMBREAKER

M

Frequent
action
violence


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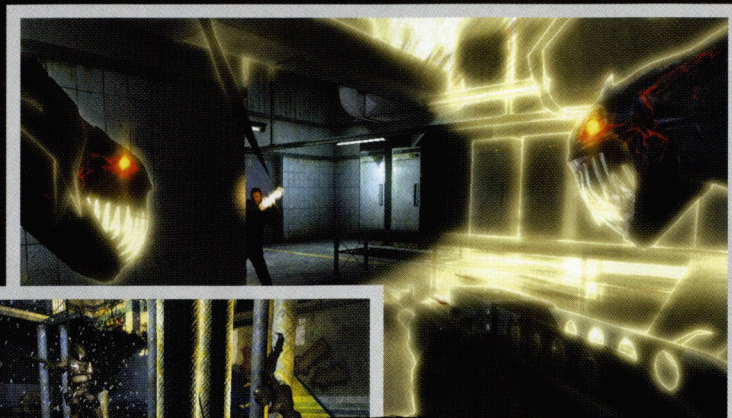
Alex Rider novels published
by Walker Books, UK and
Penguin Young Readers Group, USA

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ROADSHOW FILMS

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MOVIES!

**THESE SEPTEMBER
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**



"That's weird, I wonder why the walls are turning whi...oh my God!"



"This might be the beer talking, but you've got real pretty eyes"



"Oh man my wallet was in there and it had that chick's number in there. Damn it"

attention. A squad car is on your tail and about to open fire. A brief play by play from his two buddies in the front brings you up to speed with where you are headed and the general state of affairs in the Franchetti family. After noticing your conversation is being constantly broken up by bullet holes, gunfire, and the untimely demise of your buddy Nino, you decide that now might be the appropriate time to return fire and have at them. Jolly good show! However, you're too late, and more cop cars enter the fray. Before you can say "stugatz" you're headed into a construction site. More accurately, you're crashing full speed into a construction site, in spectacular fashion. Kind of like the cops crashing into the mall in *The Blues Brothers*.

After navigating your way out of the crushed and smoking wreck, you notice your boy Mikey, and he don't look good at all. Half hanging out of the car, limbs all limp, looking like he's about to check out. You drag him to safety where he gives you another piece (that's a handgun, not "of ass"), which now brings your count to two. Throughout the majority of the game, you'll be dual wielding, and who could blame you? Ever since John Woo put two pistols in Chow Yun Fat's hands in *The Killer*, every hit man under the sun (or dark) wants to dual wield, gangland-style. Mikey mumbles something about taking out the site foreman to finish the hit and kindly decides to kick the bucket.

Now locked and loaded you make your way via elevators, across rooftops, up ladders and scaling scaffolding, doing what you do best... killing people. And today is a busy, busy day. After a while you notice a room that has been freshly painted, and looks a little off. You spy a T.V. in the corner, but pay it no mind. While walking around you see blood seeping from a closed door. You open it, triggering a trap, which also turns on the TV. It's your Uncle

Frankie, informing you you're about to buy the farm. Deep down you always knew he never trusted you. Insecure little bastard. You kind of believe him. As you open up the wardrobe, you notice a corpse with a party hat on, a "Happy Birthday Jackie" sign and about 36 pounds of TNT strapped to his chest. All that is of little consequence as you are now cruising at an altitude of about 100 feet as you pitch yourself out of a window to avoid the explosion.

You awake, again, in a storage room adjacent to a cemetery. After a brief kill fest, you negotiate your way through to a public toilet, and that's where the fun begins, because you are about to get possessed by the Darkness. When you come to, you'll immediately notice three things. You've got a couple of evil looking snake like tentacles, one for each side, and a nasty little hobbit, known as a darkling is giggling at you. The tentacles look awesome and we've been told that their powers will grow as the game progresses. They can access hidden areas, protect you, open black holes to send punks into another dimension and you can gauge from their colour, roughly, how much health you have left. The darklings are a totally different story altogether. They will happily do your bidding, as long as it involves death, destruction and dismemberment. They can fillet and fricassee your victims quicker than Hannibal Lector and still have time to whip up a side

of fava beans, or better yet, turn them into another respawning darkling, who can't wait to defenestrate.

The visuals are absolutely astounding, really pushing the "wow!" factor, and the gameplay is a real blast. At this point *The Darkness* is looking like the must have FPS for the PS3. Whether you like comics or not, this is one title we'd ride through the gates of hell for. **D**



"Hey - that's your darkling, right?"
"Oh... uh, yeah"

TOP 5 CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

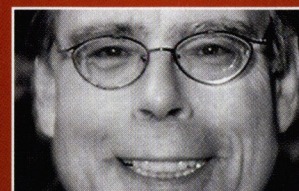
1. MICHAEL JACKSON

C'mon! It was a no brainer. He's a freak.



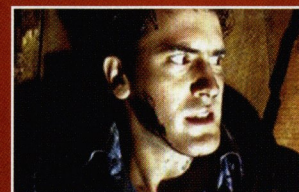
2. STEPHEN KING

Don't look directly into his eyes. He'll kidnap you, and use you as inspiration for his latest book.



3. BAD ASH

Better than that pansy ass goody two shoes Ash any day of the week. Gotta love Bruce Campbell. Hail to the King, baby!



4. THAT CHICK FROM THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN

"I'm very discreet... but I'll haunt your dreams". Never have truer words been spoken!



5. ELVIRA

Need we say more?



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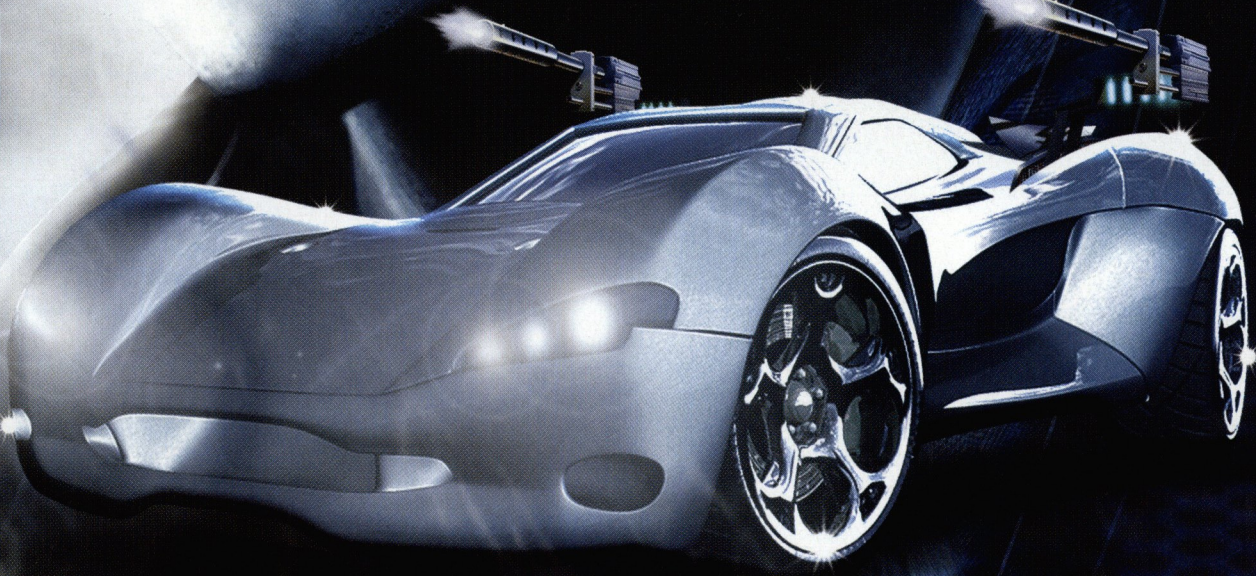


EQUIPPED WITH AN ARSENAL OF WEAPONS,
THE INTERCEPTOR IS LETHAL ON LAND OR WATER.



THE ULTIMATE ASSAULT VEHICLE TRANSFORMS
FROM CAR TO BOAT TO MOTORCYCLE.

THE MISSION IS DANGEROUS,
THE DRIVER IS LETHAL,
THE CAR IS LEGENDARY.
THE HUNT IS ON...



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M

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PlayStation 2

MIDWAY

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WIN A FREE PLAYSTATION 3

Who wants a free Premium PS3 worth \$999.95? Every single person on planet Earth – that's who! The PS3 has sexier curves than an airbrushed *Ralph* model, more computing power than the Pentagon and the best games in

the universe! It's true. Those dumbass Martians are still playing that *ET* Atari 2600 cartridge they found in the desert after crashlanding near Area 51.

Thanks to our good friends at THQ and SEGA we've got a Premium PS3 console and the super cool launch game

Sonic The Hedgehog to giveaway to one unbelievably lucky reader. Feel the eye-melting speed of next-gen Sonic, gawk at the ridiculously high definition Blu-ray movies and generally impress the hell out of all your mates with the hottest piece of technology on the planet!

WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

You'll be getting the best of the best with this Premium PS3. It comes with a 60GB hard drive and the new PS3 controller that's wireless, rechargeable and motion-sensing. Your PS3 will also connect to the Internet and your PSP wirelessly right out of the box. For the ultimate in picture clarity, no matter what TV you're watching it on, your PS3 supports every video cable from composite to the purely digital HDMI and every resolution from 480i standard definition to 1080p super high definition. With this sucker setup in your loungeroom you could start charging admission and retire off the proceeds.





Turn to **page 50** to read our exclusive Sonic preview and find out why it's a must-have launch title!

PLUS

THE COOLEST PS3
LAUNCH GAME...

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

SEGA

HOW TO ENTER

Who is the mysterious new hedgehog that appears in *Sonic The Hedgehog*? Answer the above question, mark your entry with 'PS3 giveaway' as the subject and send it to ops2@derwenthoward.com.au or post entries via snail mail to OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW, 1355 with 'PS3 giveaway' clearly marked on the front of the envelope. Include the name of the competition, your answer and your name, address, age and contact number. Good luck.

PLAYSTATION 3

PLAYSTATION 3 LAUNCH HEROES

LUKE REILLY, TRISTAN OGILVIE, NICK O'SHEA, PAUL FREW


With lift-off just around the corner we thought you'd need the definitive guide for the PS3's launch line-up. We've got our mits on the games hitting shelves on day one. From *Carbon* to *Call of Duty*, *Tiger* to *Tony* and *MotorStorm* to *Marvel* - they're all here. It's T minus 10 and counting, so which ones will YOU be going home with on November 17?



NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

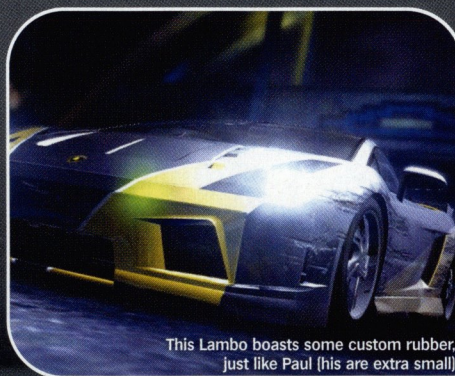
Street racing – carbonated

If you've been following our *Carbon* coverage no doubt you'd already be up to speed on details about the *Need for Speed* series' PS3 debut. However, one thing EA has been quiet on was the vastly improved visual customisation system – until now. *Carbon*'s 'Autosculpt' system will allow for an unprecedented level of tinkering, never-before-seen in the franchise. Instead of just selecting from a list of pre-determined kits you'll have total analogue control (like creating a golfer in *Tiger Woods* or a boxer in *Fight Night*) over around seven to 10 Autosculpt regions with numerous

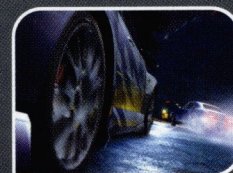
pieces in each one. You'll be able to raise, lower, enlarge, shrink, twist and angle major pieces of your ride, from spoilers to bonnet scoops. You'll even be able to mess about with your tyres and rims in the same way, changing the width and profile of your rubber and so on. 

OPINION

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON may have to contend with *MotorStorm* as the PS3 premier launch racer – but it's got the heritage, the cars and the speed to do it.



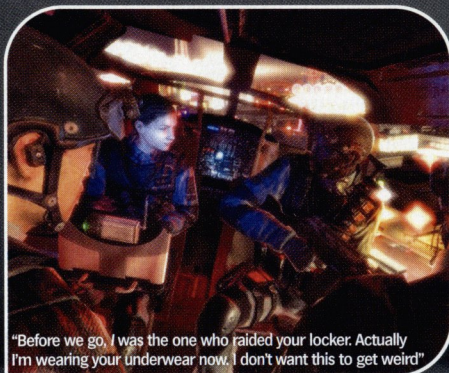
This Lambo boasts some custom rubber, just like Paul (his are extra small)



ALSO ON PS2 & PSP!


RAINBOW SIX VEGAS

Vegas baby, Vegas



"Before we go, I was the one who raided your locker. Actually I'm wearing your underwear now. I don't want this to get weird"

Did you know the mayor of Las Vegas, Oscar Goodman, is taking exception to the setting of Ubisoft's upcoming *Rainbow Six Vegas* game? He has an issue with the plot, which sees terrorists seizing a swanky casino on the strip and taking hostages, primarily because he thinks it's based on a false premise. What he doesn't realise is that most fiction is based on a false premise. If it weren't it would be non-fiction. Anyway, *RSV* looks set to be a top-notch tactical shooter with incredible graphics and multiple routes to objectives. Take the fire stairs or rappel down the

building? Your choice. You'll also be able to blindfire around objects, tag enemies with your snake-cam for your teammates to liquidate before you enter a room and backhand doors to open them without standing out in the open (and toss grenades with one breach-toss motion). Jackpot. 


OPINION

RAINBOW SIX VEGAS will be a more cerebral shooter than *Resistance: Fall of Man* or *Call of Duty 3*, but its more tactical approach will make it a worthy diversion.

MOTORSTORM

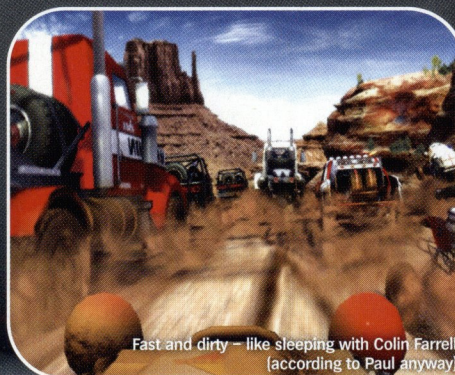
This storm ain't blowing over!

Picture this – you're barreling through a twisty canyon in the 4WD that time forgot, suspension working overtime as you churn up thick curtains of mud in your wake. A dirtbike squeezes by, the rider flipping you the bird on his way past. There's an accident up ahead and a fragile dune buggy is flung sideways. It spirals through the air in a cloud of debris. You blast underneath it. Suddenly you're shunted from behind and you crash into an ATV. The rider desperately clings to the handlebars as he is flung upside-down, kicking madly as he's hurled in front of his four-wheeler. The next thing you know, you're

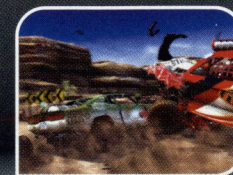
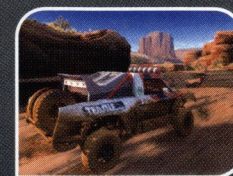
marooned on your roof with no idea of what just happened. Interested? Good, because that didn't just spring from our imagination – that's 30 seconds with *MotorStorm*. The action is thick and fast, and to win you'll need to dodge debris, rocks, mud, dust and busted bits of other cars. *Burnout* meets *WRC*? Bingo! 

OPINION

MOTORSTORM is looking like the launch racer to beat. *Carbon* has the cars, but *MotorStorm* has the carnage! We can't wait to get our hands dirty with this one...



Fast and dirty – like sleeping with Colin Farrell (according to Paul anyway)



LAUNCH HEROES

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN

Mankind's greatest war won't be against each other



"I said a large McChicken meal – don't MAKE me talk to your manager"

You want a man against martian, no-holds-barred war of the worlds? Look no further. *Resistance: Fall of Man* is a gritty, gory shooter set in an alternate timeline. It's 1951, World War II never happened because aliens have overrun Asia and Europe, and they're about to cross the channel to crush ol' Blighty. If the sheer intensity of the conflict doesn't grab you maybe a few of the cool weapons will. How about a plasma ball you can fire bullets into, let it hover by an enemy then trigger it to unleash a swarm of lead in one

quick burst? How about a tracking gun that sends every subsequent bullet homing in on the first, *The Fifth Element*-style? How about an explosive sphere that sends spikes in every direction, instantly giving you hundreds of places to hang your coat? Don't miss this one. **A**

OPINION

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN should be on everyone's launch list. It's *Call of Duty* with aliens and hardcore *Ratchet & Clank*-style weaponry. We're sold.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Super Sonic!

The premise behind *Sonic The Hedgehog* is simple – deliver the spirit of the 16-bit originals wrapped in visuals only the horsepower of the PS3 can provide. The 15-year-old Sega superstar has undergone a sleek new makeover, the world is as picturesque as a postcard and we'll be introduced to a brand-new playable character – Silver the Hedgehog. Silver may lack Sonic's speed, but he will come tooled up with a host of telekinetic abilities.

Sonic's new game is split into two types of gameplay: action stages and town stages. The action stages are

typical *Sonic* – jumps, loops, bumpers and flatout sprints to the end. You'll even be able to run along walls *Matrix*-style and hitch a ride with giant eagles. The town sections will be more open areas that'll allow Sonic to mingle with other characters and explore his surroundings. **A**

OPINION

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG should usher the veteran Sega mascot into the next generation at supersonic speed and will be just the shot in the arm the series needed.

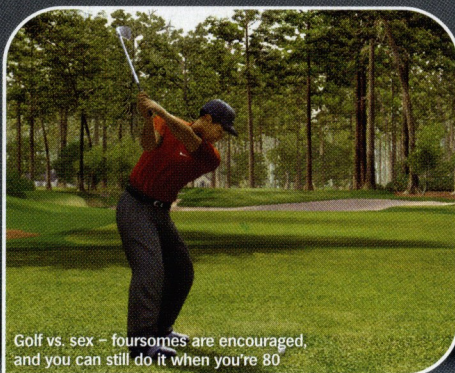
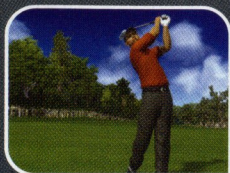


Sonic walks into a bar. The bartender says, "Hey pal, why so blue?" (hey, it's been a long day)



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07

It's all in the hips; it's all in the hips...



Golf vs. sex – foursomes are encouraged, and you can still do it when you're 80

There are a bunch of reasons why some golfers think golf is better than sex – primarily you can stop in the middle and have a beer and a steak, if your balls aren't performing you can replace them and a below par performance is considered good. We'll stop short of saying Tiger's PS3 debut will be better than a horizontal hoedown, but *Tiger 07* will raise the bar with stunning visuals and super-refined controls. Fades and draws have been returned to the left stick and the attribute-based True Aiming system will make for a far more rewarding challenge. Courses will also have a lot

more undulation to them so balls will often take erratic bounces off rolling fairways. Even small things, like the way the crowd tracks the ball through the air and Tiger's amazingly realistic facial expressions (thanks to EA's new universal facial capture technology, U-Cap) add plenty to the experience. **A**

OPINION

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07 will be the closest you'll ever get to the pro tour short of dating Michelle Wie – and you won't need goofy pants and a fat ass to play it.

ALSO ON PS2 & PSP!

CALL OF DUTY 3

Above and beyond?

ALSO ON PS2 & PSP!



"Pink with lavender highlights? Sounds great honey. What? Of course I'm serious. No - I really want to talk about this, I do. Jeez babe, I'm just a little busy right now, that's all"

Operation Overlord, or D-Day, was a hell of a time to be a soldier. If you weren't sloshing ankle-deep in vomit on a ship waiting for the go ahead, you were sitting on an airstrip carrying a parachute and half your weight in supplies. That, or you were goosestepping around Normandy with no idea the Allies were dropping in before breakfast to give Fritz a swift kick up the jacksie - you included. 19,000 soldiers died on D-Day - but that's nothing compared to the half a million who died in the battles that followed. This is where *Call of Duty 3* comes in - a narrative driven, cinematic epic that follows four Allied soldiers and their roles in the Normandy Breakout - a series of clashes that led to the liberation of Paris. You'll be fastening yourself into the fatigues of a US Army infantryman, a British SAS commando, a Polish tank commander

and a Canadian mechanised soldier.

The *Call of Duty* series has already left main rival *Medal of Honor* behind, a bullet-ridden corpse and shadow of its once great self. However, developer Treyarch is hardly content to rest on its laurels. *COD3* will outstrip its critically acclaimed predecessor in almost every way possible with jaw-dropping effects, stomach-churning explosions, reactive AI and unmatched intensity.

It's hard to do *COD3*'s frenzied and brutal close-quarters battles justice on paper, but imagine you're pinned behind a stone wall. Your spine reverberates to concussion of an almighty blast, and when the smoke clears you're left staring at a hole you could drive a bus through. You see the tank responsible, smoke wafting from the tip of its cannon, and a slight heat haze shimmering above it. A stricken German fighter shears

through a church steeple like a meteor and disappears in a white-hot fireball. Sprinting across the debris-ridden street, the second floor of a nearby building goes up in flames, slivers of glass spewing out of every window. A pair of Nazis tumble out, burning and screaming. This is exactly the kind of detail you can expect. It's shocking, but it's war. And Treyarch isn't pulling any punches.

You can also expect 24-player online multiplayer, complete with vehicles and all the deathmatch trimmings you'd want. Other multiplayer details are still a little hazy, but expect them to be a big hit.

It's been some time since we've seen how *Medal of Honor Airborne* and *Brothers in Arms Hell's Highway* are coming along, but *Call of Duty 3* ought to be the closest the post-war generation will ever get to WWII without a time machine and a death wish. **B**



GET THE DRIFT?

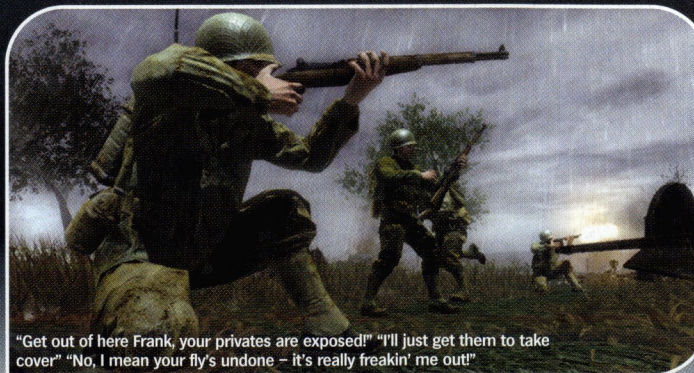
You want attention to detail? You got it. Two words - drift physics. Contrary to what you may be thinking it has nothing to do with street racing. In fact it's far more minor than that - it's all about billowing smoke responding to wind and weather in the game and drifting across the battlefield in real time. Is there nothing the PS3 can't account for?

OPINION

CALL OF DUTY 3 could redefine the way we see and play WWII shooters. If the entire game is anywhere near as visceral and atmospheric as our short demo it's not hard to imagine.



"Sarge, I think my gun's jammed!"
"Tell me about it - you were crap last night!"



"Get out of here Frank, your privates are exposed!" "I'll just get them to take cover" "No, I mean your fly's undone - it's really freakin' me out!"

LAUNCH HEROES

WARHAWK

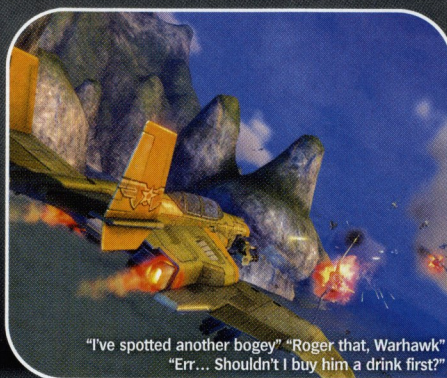
Those magnificent men in their flying machines!

Incognito has been trying to shoehorn a *Warhawk* sequel into production for years, so with the advent of PS3 the team jumped at the chance – although *Warhawk* for PS3 is less of a sequel and more a reinvention of the original. You'll play as a fighter pilot named Zack Archer, and when you're not slogging it out on the ground with all manner of high-tech weapons, 4x4s, and tanks you'll be soaring through the skies in the most advanced aircraft in the world – the *Warhawk*. Up among the clouds you'll need to contend with hundreds of enemies intent on turning you into a smoldering crater.

Warhawk's trump card is its use of the PS3 controller's six axes motion-sensing, meaning you can use the controller itself to pilot your ship around instead of the analogue sticks. That, combined with a number of super-slick online multiplayer modes, makes *Warhawk* a tantalising prospect indeed. Bring on November! **A-**

OPINION

WARHAWK is part flight sim and part shooter, but all action. Plus, once you get your hands around the motion-sensing flight controls you'll wonder how you ever did without it!



"I've spotted another bogey" "Roger that, Warhawk"
"Err... Shouldn't I buy him a drink first?"



FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES

The lines have been drawn!



"Hey, has Frank come into the office yet? I need to get..." CRRRAAAASH!

Full Auto 2 is easy to explain – think of it as the spawn of a bizarre three-way love triangle between *Burnout*, *FlatOut* and *Twisted Metal*. It combines *Burnout's* breakneck speed, *FlatOut's* off-the-chart environmental destruction and *Twisted Metal's* unbridled firepower into a violent combat-racing cocktail. Not only can you blast the crap out of your opponents, you can lay waste to the track itself to open new paths, create obstacles or crush your competitors with falling debris. *Full Auto 2* also boasts an arena mode, 20 tracks and 25 rides ranging from pimped-out lowriders to gleaming sports

cars to hulking SUVs. The oft-abused 'Unwreck' feature has also been toned down – a feature in the Xbox 360 version that allowed you to rewind time to undo errors, *Prince of Persia*-style. That's not to say it's been removed, but just that you won't be able to use it as liberally as you could in the original. **B-**

OPINION

FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES is a total overhaul of the Xbox 360 original. It may not be *Burnout 5*, but hopefully it should do for the meantime!

NBA LIVE 07

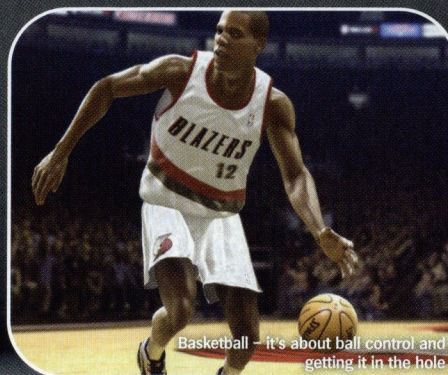
Slam dunk?

For some games the differences between current-gen and next-gen aren't really that readily apparent, save for some snazzy visual effects or flashy graphics. The real key to the next generation of gaming is believability and authenticity – something that the somewhat stilted and stupid sports game characters of yore lacked. But not for much longer. *NBA Live 07* will boast plenty of new tech, but none more impressive than EA's new procedural motion technology. Players will now follow objects with their eyes, squinting and widening their peepers as they track objects around

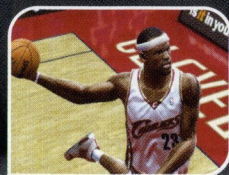
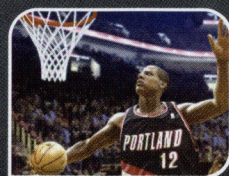
the court. If required they'll also naturally move their head and shoulders as well. They'll even be able to dynamically dodge with a quick shift of the shoulders or a bend of the waist, and lean into turns as they alter direction. The result? Fluid, natural movement. The verdict? It's a slam dunk! **A-**

OPINION

NBA LIVE 07 is more than just a cosmetic upgrade and roster update – it's part of a new wave of sports games that are shrinking the gap between simulation and reality.



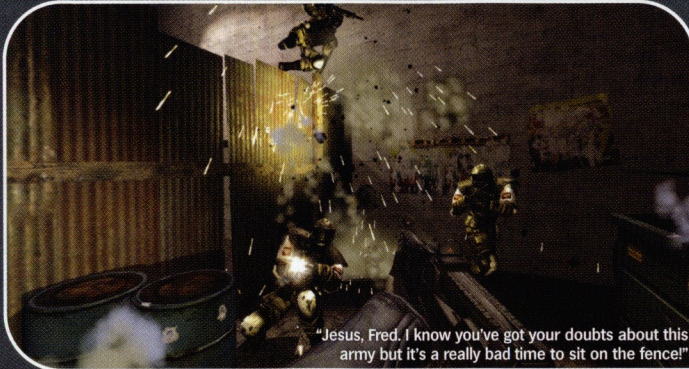
Basketball – it's about ball control and getting it in the hole



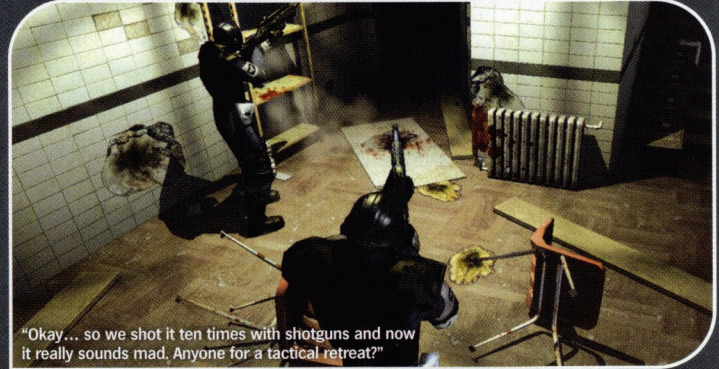
ALSO ON PS2!

F.E.A.R.

Be afraid... Be 'wear dark slacks, just in case' afraid...



"Jesus, Fred. I know you've got your doubts about this army but it's a really bad time to sit on the fence!"



"Okay... so we shot it ten times with shotguns and now it really sounds mad. Anyone for a tactical retreat?"

The U.S. Army has created a special division to deal with paranormal threats to national security, which is rather handy, considering the situation they're currently facing. One of their top-secret weapons projects has gone rogue – the future of battlefield deployment, a psychic commander with the ability to telepathically control a whole battalion of clone super soldiers. With the research facility overrun, you're the recon operative sent in to fight your way through a thousand heavily armed clone troops and take down the commander leading the revolt to neutralise the situation. Early intelligence reports sighting a strange little girl wandering the facility amid the chaos...

As Criterion realised in creating *Black*, the first step to creating

a great FPS is the guns, and the development team at Monolith has really done its homework. Through the course of the game you'll wield an assortment of real-world weaponry including submachine guns, assault rifles and shotguns, as well as a few devices that aren't exactly street legal in this day and age. Every single round fired punches holes in brick walls, sending debris flying and filling the air with sparks. While the visual effects may seem overstated at first glance, coupled with the soundscape of meaty, bass-filled blasts, it makes for some of the most satisfying firearms you'll ever get to pack.

Though it's become par for the course to promise super intelligent foes in games, *F.E.A.R.* really does deliver the goods. The clone soldiers won't just blindly charge at you, but will legitimately

attempt to outmanoeuvre, outflank and outwit you. If you try to huddle up behind cover, they simply flush you out with a volley of grenades.

Up against a thousand cunning soldiers, you'd need to have some kind of edge, and that comes in the form of your character's hyper-developed reflexes. Drawing on your souped-up reactions, you can slow down time, giving you far more opportunity to endure the relentless onslaught. *F.E.A.R.* even manages to incorporate these slow-mo mechanics in the multiplayer component of the game and pull it off with style.

With obvious influence from Hong Kong action movies and eastern horror films like *The Ring*, *F.E.A.R.* brings a blend of visceral close quarters gun battles, chilling terror and a compelling plot with more twists and turns than a mountain road. **B**

FEARSOME!

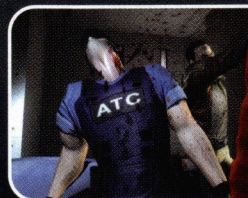
While the exacts of the PS3 version of *F.E.A.R.* are still being finalised, we expect it to feature new weaponry, unique levels and modes of play unseen in previous incarnations of the game. *F.E.A.R.* will also harness the power of the almighty PS3 for gorgeous HDR lighting, allowing for absorbingly atmospheric shadows.

OPINION

F.E.A.R. will deliver both an absorbing single-player game and a wealth of multiplayer modes that boast frantic, white-knuckled action.



"Stop firing, jackass. Can't you see this room's bulletproof?"



LAUNCH HEROES

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8

Board games that don't suck

ALSO ON PS2 & PSP!



Lean over and grab wood. Incidentally, that's also the last thing Paul hears before he hits the sack



You think she'd be keen to help us perfect our melon grabs? No?

It takes a pretty simple formula to create a great skating game: you need flips and grinds that are bitching, maybe throw in a little skitching and even some itching (from the gravel rash on your knees). But somewhere along the way the *Tony Hawk* series has drifted from the unadulterated focus on skating that defined the franchise back on PSone, and *Jackass* tomfoolery, bloated storylines and several other unwelcome and unnecessary additions have since polluted the experience.

Thankfully, *Tony Hawk's Project 8* is all about turning more tricks than a call girl when Charlie Sheen is in town. The plot is kept to a bare minimum, and instead the emphasis is on crafting your own tricks, nailing the biggest combos and finding the most daring skating lines – you can even build them yourself by moving objects around such as benches

and dumpsters within the sprawling game environment.

THP8 is built around an entirely new game engine, and the real world physics simply have to be seen to be believed. Skating down slopes realistically builds momentum and if you go too fast your skater will even get 'speed wobbles'. The tricks themselves look incredibly fluid, and in particular the transitions from one trick to another are as smooth as silk.

It's only realistic to a point, though, and there's still some comic relief to be found in the *FlatOut*-inspired bail minigames which let you come off the board and aftertouch your skater's ragdolling body to knock down bowling pins and the like.

Throughout the game world other skaters will mark their best records for grinds or launch heights in chalk, and if you can beat them then your mark will be scrawled onto the pavement and your

move up the rankings will continue (you begin the game ranked #200 in the city). Each 'chalk challenge' has three marks to beat, effectively easy, medium and hard difficulty, so you don't actually choose a difficulty level when you start the game, you just naturally work up to the tougher moves as you play.

The evolution of your character will be a much more gradual process in *THP8*; seasoned pros won't be able to just max out their attributes within the first few hours of gameplay as the skills will improve in an organic way, much like your average RPG. So for example you might get an upgrade to your rail balance for every 1,000 feet you grind and so on. This way, the moves that you practise the most will automatically become your strengths. Consider our melon grab, stiffy and sacktap attributes already maxed. ▬

IT'S TRICKY!

Easily one of the coolest new features in *THP8* is the 'Nail the Trick' gameplay mechanic. Once you've built up your Special meter you can click both thumbsticks in to go into the Focus mode, and then you manipulate each thumbstick for independent control of the skater's feet, creating customised flip tricks on the fly.

OPINION

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8 is not really a reinvention of the series, but it does look like it will focus on what made the series so popular to begin with: pure, freestyle skating.



SHREDDING SHELVES

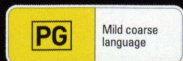
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LAUNCH HEROES

FATAL INERTIA

You had us at, "It's not *Dynasty Warriors* or *G1 Jockey*" KOEI...



Inertia – a concept most commonly defined using Isaac Newtown's First Law of Motion (not to be confused with his lesser known Eighth Law, 'It's not the meat, it's the motion' – he used that one on his wife). At any rate, *Fatal Inertia* certainly has potential. Featuring suitably gnarly visuals thanks to the Unreal Engine 3 and a sweet set of racing physics designed to encourage gamers to skim as close to the surface as possible for maximum speed, *Fatal Inertia* is promising to be a blisteringly fast, nosebleed-inducing futuristic racing experience. The robust physics allow for a variety of imaginative weapons that

feature cool magnetic functions, like a power-up that magnetises an opponent's ship and causes it to pick up all manner of trash that increases drag and affect handling. You'll also be able to expect a nifty ship design system that'll let you customise your ship's appearance and performance. **B**

OPINION

FATAL INERTIA isn't a launch heavyweight, but in the absence of a *Wipeout* title it has plenty of room to succeed should it live up to its promise.

NHL 2K7

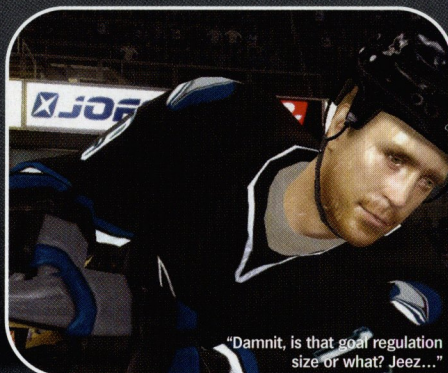
Cool as ice, twice as nice

While the NFL had no qualms about hopping into bed with EA for an exclusivity deal that shut out 2K Sports and its critically acclaimed *NFL 2K* series, the NHL wouldn't have a bar of it. EA tried to snaffle an exclusive license, but were promptly instructed to pucker off – so consumers will still have a choice when it comes to ice hockey games. *NHL 2K7* will be the first ice hockey cab off the next-gen rank featuring hundreds of new motion-captured animations, a new advanced skating engine that takes momentum into account, drop passes, new screen

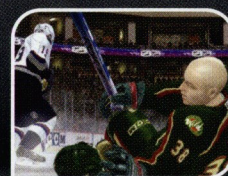
plays and the ability to mark specific opponents for defensive shadow assignments with varying degrees of pressure are all on the cards. Still no word on the ability to take your skate off and try to stab somebody, but we've waited this long – what's a little longer? **B**

OPINION

NHL 2K7 ought to hit like a runaway Zamboni amongst Australia's small legion of hockey fans. 2K6 suffered in terms of presentation but 2K7 is looking cool.



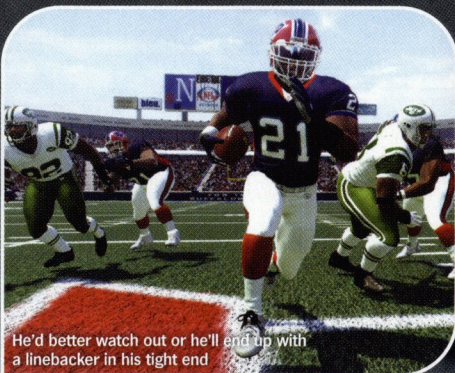
"Damn it, is that goal regulation size or what? Jeez..."



ALSO ON PS2!

MADDEN NFL 07

PS3 pigskin



He'd better watch out or he'll end up with a linebacker in his tight end

Everything we know about American football we learnt from *Madden* (and from Paul after that night he spent in Dallas with the Cowboy's defensive line in his tight end). It rarely makes a big splash here, but *Madden* is an American institution – and the series' first down on PS3 is aiming to be a touchdown.

Madden 07 will allow you to control the running game unlike ever before. After selecting a running play, if you don't want to run the ball yourself you'll be able to cycle through your offensive players to choose who you want to control after the snap. Once the ball is

hiked it's up to you to open up a hole in the defense and escort the AI ball carrier through the defensive line and into the in-goal. You can also expect next-gen graphical touches like field degradation – the more you focus on a particular patch, the more it'll tear up under the cleats of your players. **B**

OPINION

MADDEN NFL 07 will mark the 17th instalment in the series and, despite the controversy since EA forced *NFL 2K* out of the market, it's looking well worth taking a punt on.

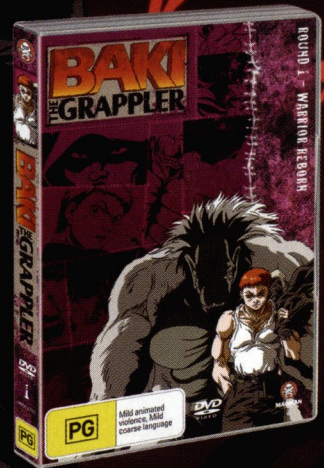
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LAUNCH HEROES

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE

ALSO ON PS2!

140 of Marvel's favourite characters all battling to save the world



"Who invited these clowns?"



Forget about the USA men's basketball team, *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance* is the only game that will allow you to create an amazing dream team.

Marvel: Ultimate Alliance will feature a whopping 140 legendary characters from the Marvel franchise with over 20 of those being playable. Much like the *X-Men Legends* games, you will jump into missions with four superheroes. Superheroes like Spider-Man, Wolverine, Captain America, Ghost Rider, Blade, Jean Grey, Storm, The Thing and many, many more. Not only will your dream team kick arse, they'll also be looking slick with their unique team logo slapped on their uniforms, designed by you.


You and your superhero squadron will be travelling to several classic

comic book locations like Atlantis and Galactus. But you'll also venture into some original locations too. One we saw was a giant pinball machine level where we battled against cyborg clones of our team. Ice Man was giving Dr Strange the cold shoulder and Thor was shocking everyone as he nailed Elektra... er, with his hammer, get your mind out of the gutter. It was confusing to start with but definitely one of the most exciting levels we've seen thus far.

Activision is keeping quiet about the story but we do know that your actions will play a part in how it pans out. You'll see different cut-scenes and plot twists based upon who is in your team and the choices you make. You'll also encounter comic side missions that recreate

epic battles from the comic book world. We haven't been told of any specific battles yet but we're crossing our fingers for Spider-Man and Venom as well as Hulk versus Wolverine. That would be sweet.

Multiplayer will also be huge on and offline in *Ultimate Alliance*. You'll have the choice to play on your own or have three mates jump in to take control of the three other characters on your team. *Ultimate Alliance* will even keep track of stats like combos, double team moves and how many baddies you've splattered. At the end of the game awards will be handed out determining who the best superhero is.

It's amazing, it's incredible, it's *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance*. You might not see anything like it again so don't miss out! 

PS3 POWERED

The PS2 is no slouch, but the PS3 version of *Ultimate Alliance* takes it to an entirely new level with normal mapping, dynamic shadows and amazing special effects. If that doesn't make sense it means that the graphics will be so good you can see the individual stitches on Spidey's outfit!

OPINION

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE throws together 140 of the most famous Marvel heroes and villains into one giant epic game. Bring it on!



"Spider-Man's balls! That's hot!"

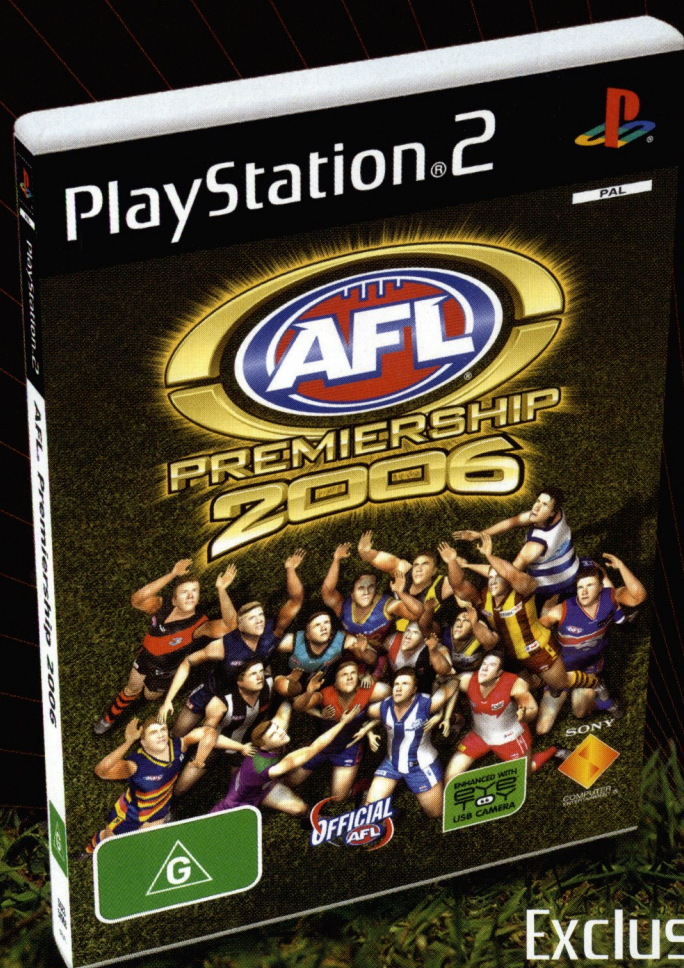


"Cut! Cut! Jeez Spider-Man! Damn, somebody get me a tissue!"



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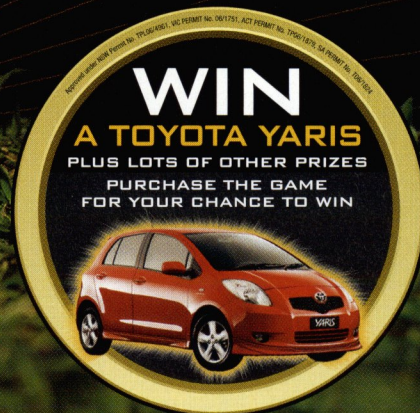
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! INFO BYTE

The team working on *Portal* was mostly humble game-design students. They created a game called *Narbacular Drop* that Valve was so impressed with they were hired on the spot.

"Now... take off your top. Come on, I'm paying for this"

HALF-LIFE 2

The PS3 gets a nasty case of crabs

First-Person Shooter

- PLAYERS: 1-TBC
- DISTRIBUTOR: EA
- DEVELOPER: VALVE
- WEB: www.half-life2.com
- LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK
- RELEASE DATE: LATE 2006

HALF-LIFE 2 brings to the PS3 the classic epic plus the *Episode One* and *Two* add-ons and bonus games *Portal* and *Team Fortress 2*. Oh yeah baby!

Gordon Freeman, everyone's favourite scientist who was in the wrong place at the wrong time (except for Dr. Howell from *Gilligan's Island*, maybe) is coming to the PS3, and this time around, he's bringing friends.

Valve, not satisfied with simply porting the 2004 monster hit, is also going to include the first two episodic expansions, as well as *Team Fortress 2* (see the boxout, kids) and the very promising teleportation game, *Portal*.

There's a very simple equation at work

here: *Half-Life*, plus more *Half-Life*, plus more *Half-Life*, always equals big smiles, plus portals. Can't forget the portals.

Half-Life 2, like the original, took basic FPS elements and did extraordinary things with them. Valve removed cut-scenes, instead relying entirely on 'scripted' events – dramatic events that took place in real-time. While broken into chapters, the game's world was virtually seamless.

Half-Life 2 took these elements, along with astounding graphics and animation, and introduced an amazing physics engine.

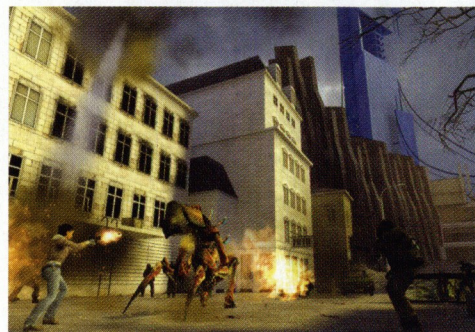
The physics added a more tangible weight to a tonne of different objects inside *Half-Life 2*'s world. Everything from humble crates and planks of wood, to toilets, sheet metal, wall heaters and corpses could be hurtled around using the now-infamous gravity gun.

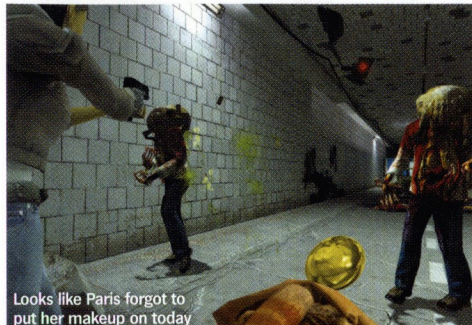
It opened the door for new gravity-based puzzles and unique ways of approaching hostile situations.

What all this means is, with the processing power of the PS3, this *Half-Life* package is going to be something very



"It's the tax man, shoot him!"

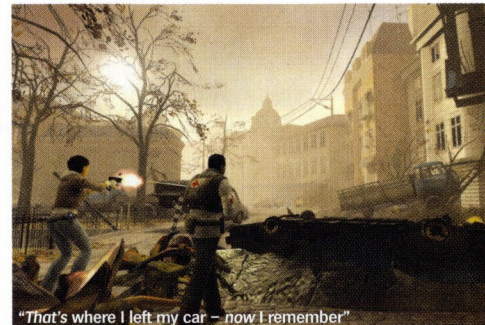




Looks like Paris forgot to put her makeup on today



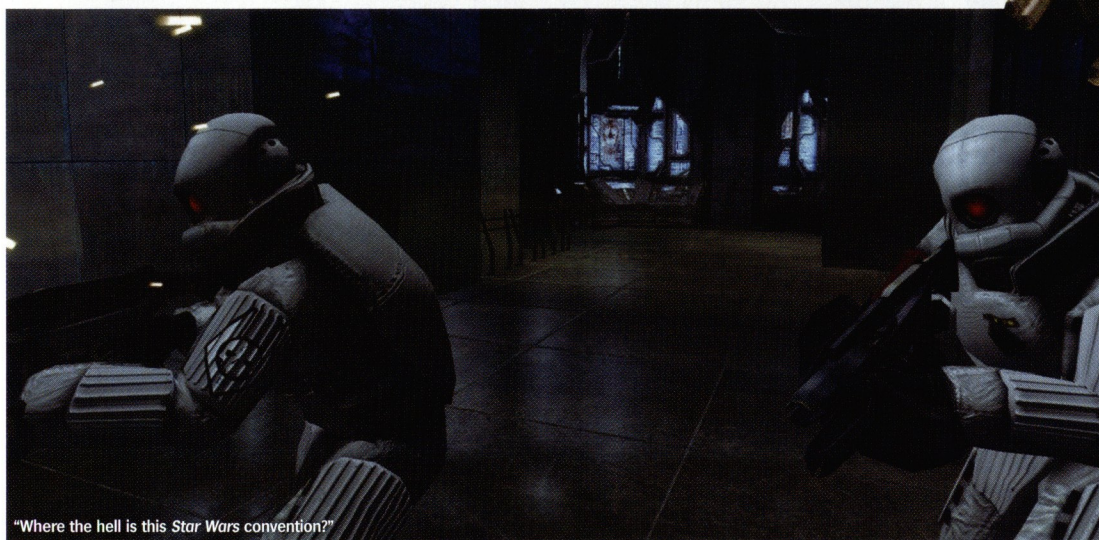
You know with the PS3's brilliant lighting effects, you kind of look cute



"That's where I left my car - now I remember"



This War of the Worlds reject is looking for Tom Cruise



"Where the hell is this Star Wars convention?"



"Oh man I gotta take a slash"

special. Undoubtedly, the PS3 version will feature all the graphical enhancements that the games feature too - high dynamic range lighting, depth-of-field blur and very natural facial animations.

But what's all this episodic business, you ask? Without spoiling the plot, *Episode One* takes off immediately where *Half-Life 2* ended. It continues to expand on the insane social oppression of Doctor Breen's reign, the vicious Combine forces and the G-Man's significance.

Location-wise, whereas *Half-Life 2*

focussed on infiltration, *Episode One* sees you and your AI partner, Alyx Vance, high-tailing it out of the Eastern European City 17. *Episode Two*, which is not out yet in any format, introduces some nifty new enemies, such as 'hunters'. These mini-striders populate the woods and are suitably camouflaged.

According to Valve, there will also be two new vehicles in *Episode Two*. One of which, a scrappy, rebel-created racer, is just itching to be thrashed about. Beyond that, details of the content is scarce. But you can

expect heady mix of intense gunplay and physics-based puzzling. Hey, it's definitely a thinking-gamers' shooter, after all.

There are plenty of questions yet to be answered - not least of which is where is *Episode 3*? Since that episode ties up the trilogy, it's odd they're not packing it in there, too. But with the advent of the PS3's gloriously spacious hard drive, we imagine that downloading further expansions directly wouldn't be out of the question. As always, when we know, you'll know - so stick around! **Patrick Kolan**

HOLDING FORT

Team Fortress 2. Ah, that brings back memories. The year was 1999 and *Half-Life's* *Team Fortress* had developed a legion of fans through the brilliant class-based strategic combat. Valve announced a sequel. Gamers cheered and the waiting began. The years passed, as they tend to; hardware and consoles moved on. But where was the promised sequel? Apparently, being turned into a Pixar-lookalike. It has a playful, non-threatening style, but Valve's Gabe Newell stated that he wants to make it the best looking and best playing class-based multiplayer game available. Them's fightin' words. Well, they've certainly had long enough, so fingers crossed.

Blast from the

Words: *Tristan Ogilvie*

Rockstar Games' first PSP release, *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories*, was an unprecedented handheld gaming experience and has been responsible for driving a large portion of PSP hardware sales over the past twelve months. Its sequel, *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories*, might be retro in style but the technology behind it is once again on the cutting edge.

Things don't end well for Victor Vance. His body is left betrayed, bullet-riddled and bloodied on the docks in Vice Port after a drug deal that goes horribly wrong, while his brother Lance flees the scene hastily in a chopper and Tommy Vercetti and that lousy Forelli lawyer who talked too much speed off in their getaway car. It's a grisly end to an honest man who was led astray; Vic was once a US marine prepared to die for his country, not for cocaine.

But if you're alive, breathing and reading this magazine then chances are you already know all of that, as what we've just described to you is the dramatic opening scene of *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. Released for PS2 way back in 2002, *Vice City* was the ambitious follow-up to the genre-defining *GTAIII* and was an even bigger success than its predecessor; to this day it is still ranked the highest selling PS2 game of all time in the United States. A large part of its appeal was that it was set in the decade of excess, the 1980s, an era in which the videogame industry was in its infancy, some of the guiltiest pleasures in the history of popular music were released and the best damn action movies ever were created.

Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories is the follow-up to 2005's *GTA: Liberty City Stories*, a game so popular that one in every three PSP owners on the planet has bought a copy of it.

Twice as vice

There are so many details yet to be confirmed about *Vice City Stories*, but looking at *GTA: Vice City* we think it's safe to presume that asset missions will augment the main story, and with any luck a few of the quirks from *Liberty City Stories* such as the inability to shoot out tyres with anything but the sniper rifle will be remedied. Though it wasn't a function in the preview build, we're still holding on to the hope that the ability to climb walls and vault over fences introduced in *San Andreas* will feature. And now that the portable *GTA* skies are no longer a no-fly zone, would it be too much to ask for *San Andreas*' jet pack?

Vice City Stories is a prequel to *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, set two years earlier in 1984, and allows players to step into the army boots of the ill-fated Vic Vance and experience the events that led to his untimely demise.

Sunglasses at night

This month we were lucky enough to be invited over to Rockstar to have some hands-on time with *Vice City Stories*, and not surprisingly we were totally blown away. Absolutely everything has been ratcheted up a notch, the graphics set a new benchmark for the PSP system, the controls have been tightened since *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories*, the missions are lengthier and far more diverse and the soundtrack is absolutely epic (we're unable to talk about it as the songs are yet to be confirmed by Rockstar, but trust us when we say that this collection of '80s tunes is arguably superior to that of *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, and the radio commercials and banter are as witty as ever).

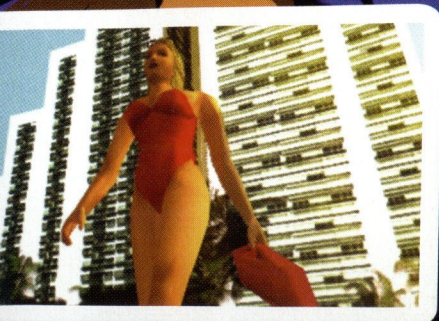
According to Rockstar, the playing area of VCS is also technically much larger than

that of *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* due to the fact that there are far more interiors to explore in the new PSP game. They've also upped the number of pedestrians and vehicles in the streets, and reduced what they describe as 'clumping', so that you'll rarely see clusters of the same pedestrian or vehicle type in the same area at the same time.

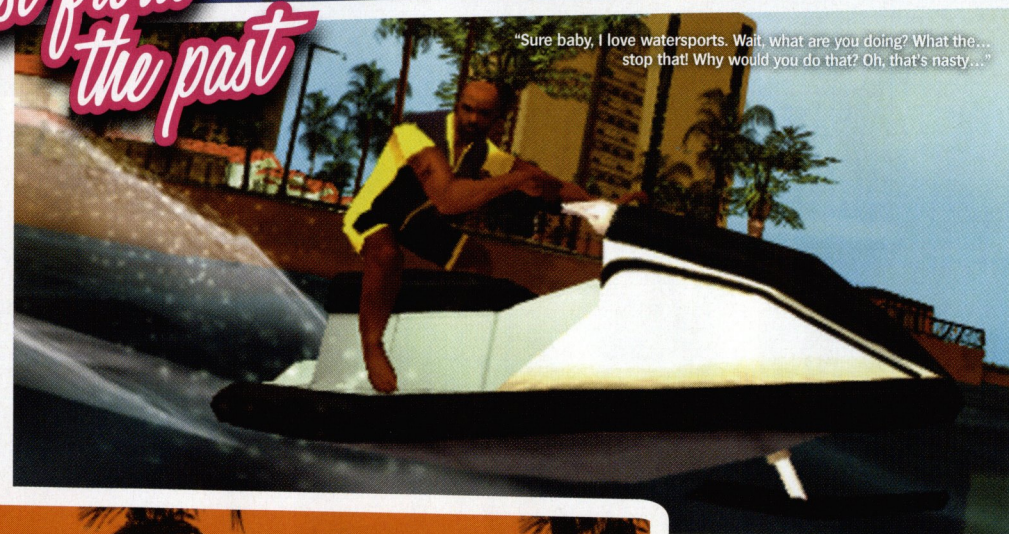
A special mention also has to be made about the in-game sunsets. We don't want to sound like a bunch of sissies, but the layered effect of blue on purple on pink on yellow in the skies of *Vice City* is honestly quite stunning – you can almost feel the warmth. When combined with the pastel-shaded architecture and the neon-soaked beach fronts of areas such as Washington Beach, you get a game world that is far richer aesthetically than the comparatively drab *Liberty City*.



We hope he's got a big trunk, because that guy's about to put his bike in it...



Blast from the past



"Sure baby, I love watersports. Wait, what are you doing? What the... stop that! Why would you do that? Oh, that's nasty..."

Screaming jets

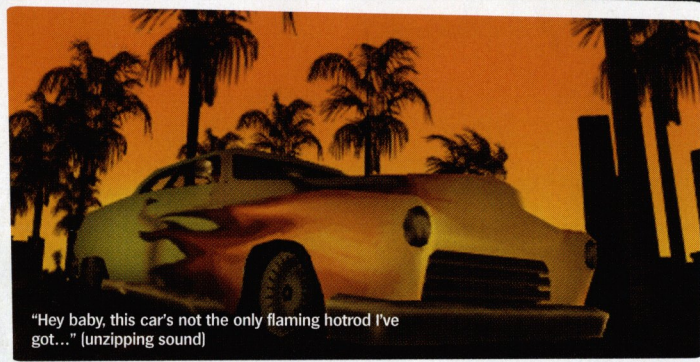
No multiplayer details have been revealed for *Vice City Stories*, but you'd have to presume that with the inclusion of the swimming ability and the huge expanses of water in *Vice City* that there'll be some aquatic multiplayer action, preferably involving the Jet Skis. Stunt-packed checkpoint races or Uzi flavoured ski-by deathmatches? It would be very much a wet dream come true.

made easier by a pair of binoculars – a nice feature of which were the on-screen arrows to show the position of off-screen enemies when you're zoomed in – and with them we were able to witness Lance getting ambushed, bound and gagged and thrown into the back of a speed boat.

With no other boats around, we jacked a Sanchez and sped off down the main drag of the Vice City mainland in hot pursuit of Lance's captors, those speedboatin' sons of bitches. They eventually docked beside a container ship near Vice Port and took Lance aboard. Rather than use the stairs, we floored it towards a ramp on the shore nearby and launched into the air, spraying Uzi fire at the goons crowding the main deck, bailing in mid air to hit the ground running and sending the flaming wreckage of our bike sliding across the deck to clear out the remaining guards. BOOM!

After gunning our way down below deck and into the bowels of the ship, we came upon Lance tied to a chair with two machine gun-toting guards and a third wielding the infamous chainsaw. Fortunately in *Vice City Stories* you can now lock on to targets and move and strafe around them while you shoot, so we were able to take out the chainsawing maniac while dodging the bullets from the other two with ease.

With Lance freed we set about liberating the ship of all its cargo – several packages of drugs – and then we climbed to the top of



"Hey baby, this car's not the only flaming hotrod I've got..." (unzipping sound)

simplified compared to *San Andreas* as, at least in the early build of the game we played, you could only swim on the surface; you couldn't dive underwater. But either way, it's certainly reassuring to know that if you inadvertently fall into the water or plow your car off a bridge you won't be instantly waking up at the hospital.

To finish the mission off, we jumped back on the Jet Ski, vaulted off a ramp up onto the shore and leapt onto a waiting PCJ-600 super bike to continue the stunts for the commercial on the streets. This first mission is an example of the diversity of the mission structure in *Vice City Stories*, as you traverse smoothly from sea to land, and it also showed how much the water has improved from the original *GTA: Vice City* as it is both translucent and exhibiting an actual underwater space with rock formations and other aquatic details.

Run to you

In the next mission, 'Leap and Bound', we headed to the rooftop above the Greasy Chopper biker club near the downtown area to watch over Lance as he attempted to rob a coke dealer on a nearby dock. The job was

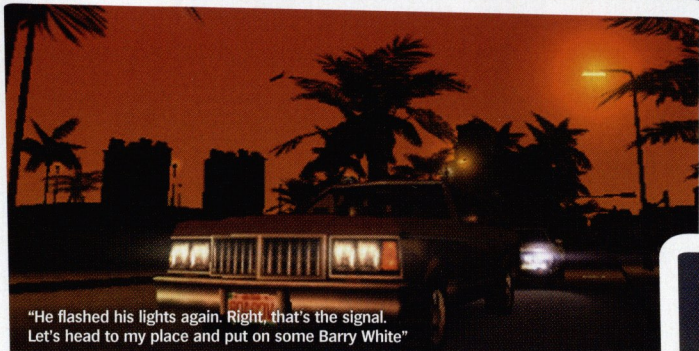
Working for the weekend

As the story goes, Victor Vance is a marine on his way to the US naval base in Guantanamo Bay who decides to stop off on the way and hook up with his brother, Lance, for some rest and relaxation in Vice City. But before too long Vic gets himself caught up in Lance's illegal activities, and therein lies the bulk of the *Vice City Stories* experience.

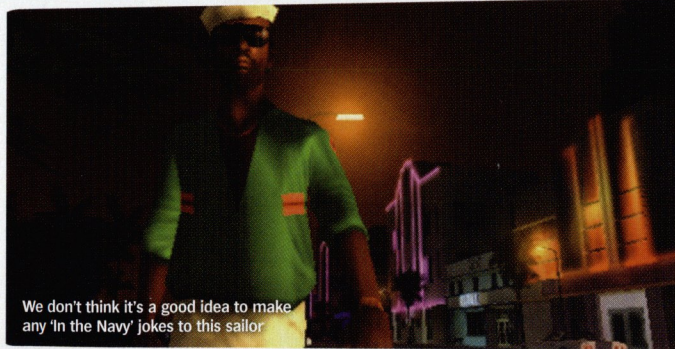
The first mission we jumped into was called 'Say Cheese'. Vic needs some spending money so he applies for a job as a stuntman in a commercial for chocolate. The mission began in the porn studio on Prawn Island. We ducked out to the small jetty on the left side of the island (where the seaplane was in *Vice City*) to find a surprise inclusion in *Vice City Stories* – a Jet Ski! This awesome sea vehicle has never been included in a

GTA game before, and after a few seconds riding it we're not sure how we ever got around on the water without it. The Jet Ski is incredibly manoeuvrable compared with a boat, and we were pulling off swift right-angle turns and 360 spins with ease. You can shift your weight on it much like you can on a motorcycle, plus the path it carves through the water looks incredible – there are more jets of white spray flying across the screen than in the last 30 seconds of a *Candy Suxxx* movie!

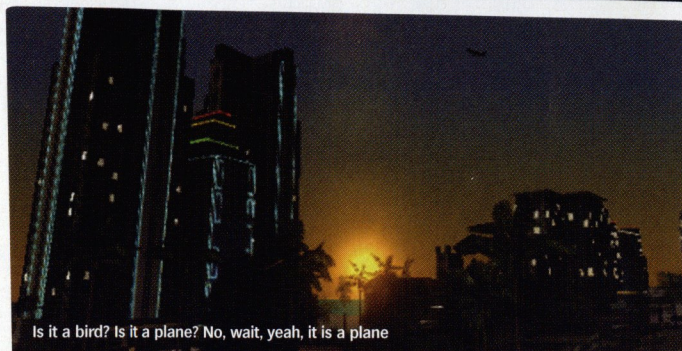
To complete the mission we had to trail behind a helicopter with a camera crew on board, pulling off insane stunts over jumps and darting through the canals in and around the Leaf Links Golf Club. At one point we stacked it trying one midair 360 too many, and thus we expected the 'Mission Failed' message while Vic sank like a stone. We were wrong – for the first time you can now actually swim the sparkling waters of Vice City! The swimming seems to be a little



"He flashed his lights again. Right, that's the signal. Let's head to my place and put on some Barry White"



We don't think it's a good idea to make any 'In the Navy' jokes to this sailor



Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, wait, yeah, it is a plane

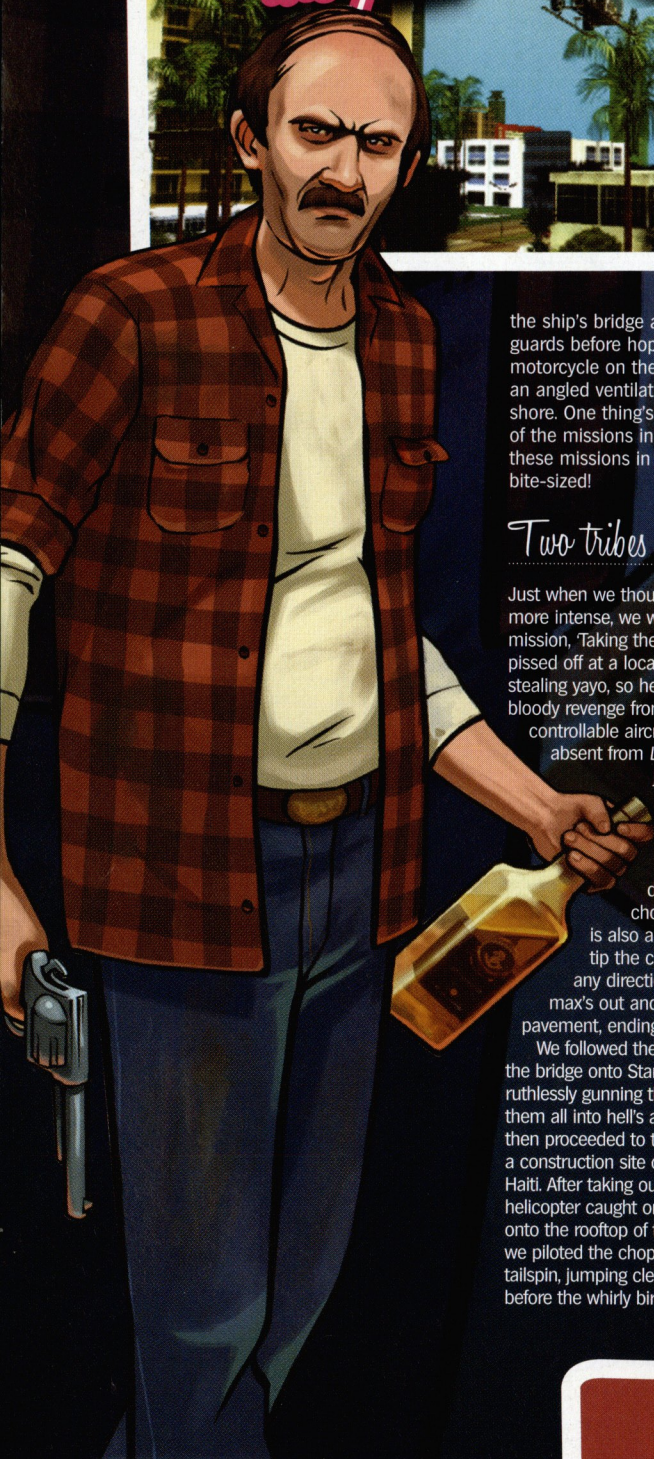


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Blast from the past

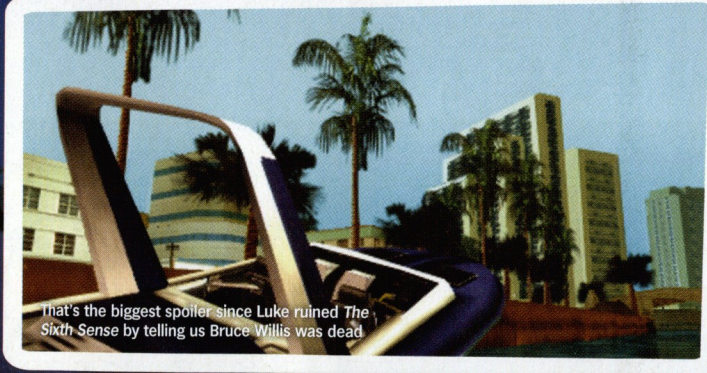


the ship's bridge and sniped the remaining guards before hopping on a nearby Angel motorcycle on the deck and jumping it off an angled ventilation shaft and back to the shore. One thing's for certain, unlike many of the missions in *Liberty City Stories*, these missions in *Vice City* are anything but bite-sized!

Two tribes

Just when we thought things couldn't get any more intense, we were thrown into the third mission, 'Taking the Fall'. Apparently Lance is pissed off at a local biker gang that has been stealing yayo, so he decides to get some bloody revenge from the skies. Enter the controllable aircraft that was noticeably absent from *Liberty City Stories*! We jumped into the chopper while Lance clung to the chopper's steel feet underneath, packing an AK47. As well as a damage meter for the chopper on-screen, there is also a balance meter – if you tip the copter too severely in any direction the balance metre max's out and Lance plummets to the pavement, ending the mission.

We followed the convoy of bikers across the bridge onto Starfish Island, with Lance ruthlessly gunning them all down and turning them all into hell's angels. Not content, we then proceeded to the gang's hideout in a construction site on the fringe of Little Haiti. After taking out some more bikers, our helicopter caught on fire and Lance bailed out onto the rooftop of the half-built hotel while we piloted the chopper into an earthbound tailspin, jumping clear at the last minute before the whirly bird exploded spectacularly



That's the biggest spoiler since Luke ruined *The Sixth Sense* by telling us Bruce Willis was dead

onto terra firma.

The grounds of the construction site were crawling with fat angry bikers, and it was quite remarkable how many enemies there were on-screen at times. We're not talking *Dynasty Warriors*-style armies, but groups and clusters of around ten enemies at a time were enough to provide a stiff enough challenge and a heavy reliance on several stacks of construction materials as cover. Eventually we blasted enough biker badasses to rescue Lance from the top of the building. Lance was typically ungrateful of our impromptu rescue mission, but it wasn't the last time he was going to be in need of our help...

Video killed the radio star

The fourth and final mission we played during our all-too-brief time with *Vice City Stories* was called 'Turn on, Tune in, Bug out'. In the cut-scene that introduces the mission, Lance is higher than Mel Gibson behind the wheel of a Lexus doing 150kmph on a Malibu freeway, and is paranoid that the VCPD have got his apartment bugged and are listening in on his underhanded operations.

It turns out that Lance's fears are justified, and so it's up to Vic to scramble to each police station in the city and destroy the police radio towers before the incriminating recordings can be transmitted and received. The transmission of the evidence was represented by an onscreen bar that gradually fills, and there was no time to waste so we hastily jumped into a Banshee and tore off to the nearest police station just south of the Malibu Club in Vice Point.

Once at the station, we scrambled up the stairs to the rooftop and made short work of the two radio antennas by blasting them to smithereens with a couple of well-aimed rockets. Naturally this got the cops' attention,

and with our wanted level jumping instantly to two stars and the streets getting a little crowded with the fuzz, we smartly decided to jack a police chopper and head for the next station in Little Havana.

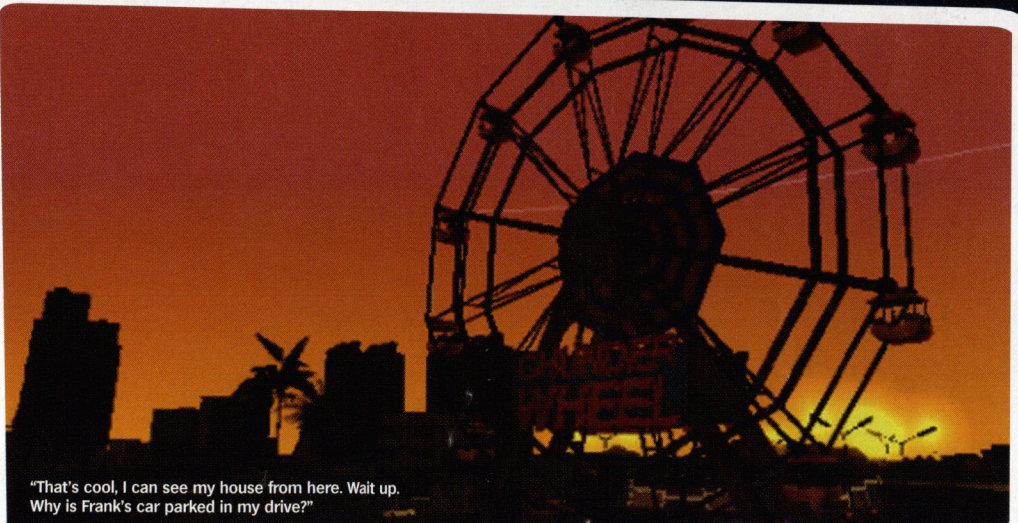
We dealt the next two antennas the same dose of rocket renovation and our wanted level jumped again to four stars, and we were now under attack from police choppers and SWAT teams rappelling down on ropes. We couldn't resist unleashing another rocket to knock one of the police helicopters spinning into a nearby high rise, the SWAT guys flailing in the air like Looney Tunes characters, but time was against us so we had to ignore the rest of the choppers and get back into the skies ourselves to head for the final building.

We arrived on the rooftop helipad of the Downtown police station, but this time the cops were waiting for us. Police choppers whirled overhead, snipers littered the surrounding rooftops – nailing these last two radio antennas wasn't going to be easy... And unfortunately our lust for carnage got the better of us, as we pumped one too many rockets into the underbellies of the attacking police choppers and were felled by the impact of the blasts. Mission failed!

And sadly our time in *Vice City* was up. But even from such a brief experience we're already convinced of one thing; 2005's *LCS*, despite its brilliance, wasn't even close to fully realising the power of the PSP as Rockstar has managed to coax even more grunt out of Sony's handheld to power *Vice City Stories*. This is truly a second generation PSP game, with gorgeous visuals, immaculate presentation, fluid controls and extremely well designed mission structure. Take our advice and prepare to add *Vice* to your portable collection this October. 📖

Days of thunder

Just south of the Leaf Links Golf Club is a Ferris wheel known as the 'Chunder Wheel'. You can even ride it and take in the stunning views of Vice City. This popular tourist attraction is no longer around by the time of the events of *GTA: Vice City*, so we have to presume that at some point in *Vice City Stories* it will be destroyed, possibly in some sort of assassination mission where you hotwire the machinery and send whoever is riding it spinning and chundering into oblivion.



"That's cool, I can see my house from here. Wait up. Why is Frank's car parked in my drive?"

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Play-test



WELCOME

It's been a month of heavy hitters. Snake made a triumphant return in the director's cut to end all director's cuts – *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence*. *FlatOut 2* ploughed into the office like a freight train, making it well and truly clear the sleeper fave racing series had well and truly arrived. Even *Yakuza* appeared from the shadows and smacked us in the face like a hurled pushbike, although the game's a little shoddy. It's black-eyes all round here at *OPS2 Towers*.

LUKE REILLY
REVIEWS EDITOR

REVIEW CHARTER

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE's reviews are the best in the business. Our squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone. And we love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our comments and scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here in Australia and overseas. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

REVIEW RATINGS

Here's what our review scores stand for:

- 10/10** Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10** A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10** Highly recommended
- 07/10** Good, solid fare that's well worth a look
- 06/10** Better than average, and acceptable for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10** An average game
- 04/10** Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10** Extremely disappointing
- 02/10** To be avoided
- 01/10** Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing, so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to games that score that magic 10/10. This score indicates gaming of simply incredible quality!



The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!



The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.



METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE

70

Still hungry? How about the new and improved Snake Eater?



FLATOUT 2

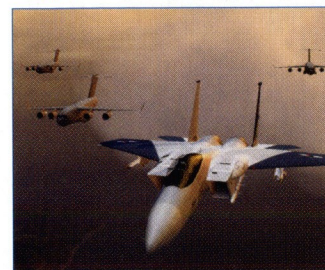
Faster with more disaster – just the way we like it!



72 YAKUZA

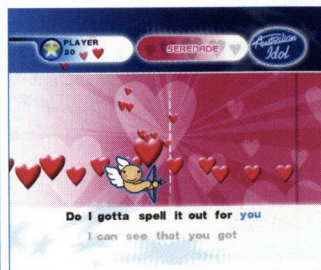
Live by the sword, die by the fist!

76



ACE COMBAT ZERO

Highway to the danger zone!



78 AUSTRALIAN IDOL SING

Voting lines are now open...



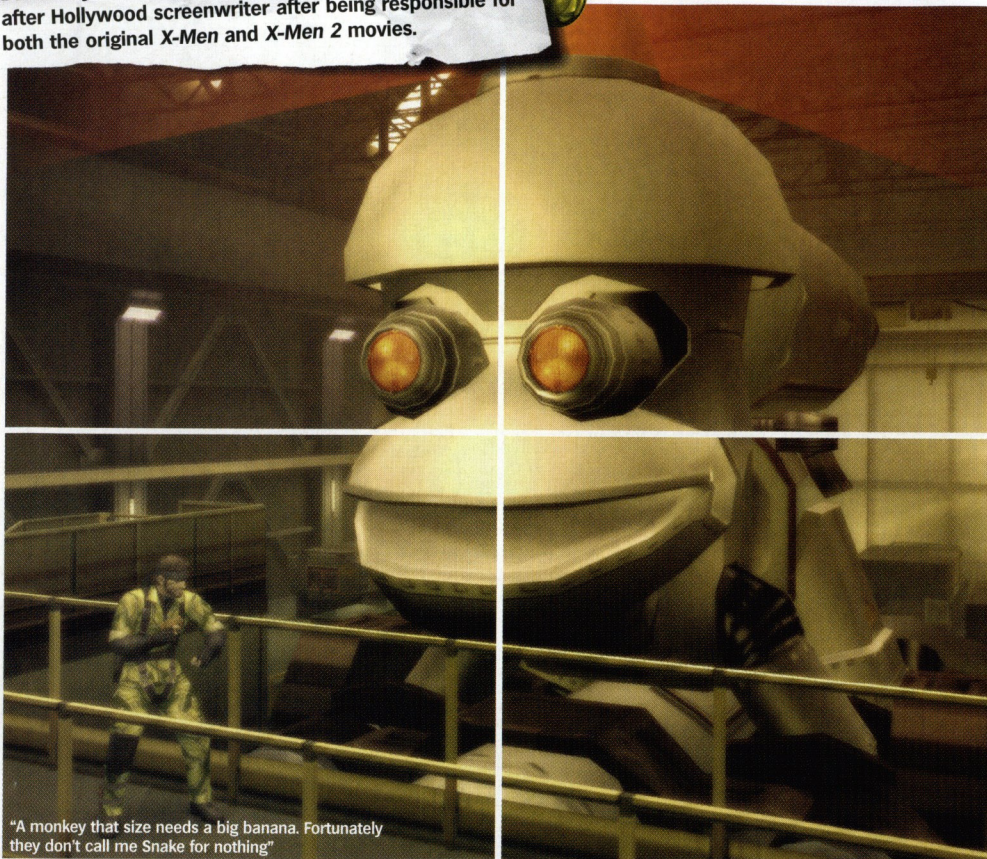
80 LET'S MAKE A SOCCER TEAM! 80

Well, why not?

Play-test

FUN FACT!

David Hayter, the voice of Snake, is also a much sought-after Hollywood screenwriter after being responsible for both the original *X-Men* and *X-Men 2* movies.



"A monkey that size needs a big banana. Fortunately they don't call me Snake for nothing"



"Smell it, smell my perfume! Come on, I bought it for you!"

ACTION

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE



Take two aaannnddd... action!

DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI ■ DEVELOPER: KONAMI ■ PRICE: \$69.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.konami.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: YES ■ ONLINE: YES

BACK STORY

Konami's *Metal Gear* series originated back in '87 as a top-down perspective stealth game. Over the years, it has become the yardstick by which any self-respecting game would wish to be measured.

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater

WORSE THAN
Metal Gear Solid 4?

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME
The Ultimate Snake Package

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX
The time we must wait until MGS4!

Okay, so we've always had a sneaking suspicion that Snake was the brother/clone/love-child of Snake Plissken from John Carpenter's *Escape from New York*. The eye patch, the Clint Eastwood drawl, the "I heard you were dead" jokes. Be that as it may, *Metal Gear Solid* has become one of the most successful franchises in gaming history. So, just what is *MGS: Subsistence*? It's a time machine. It's a look at where *MGS* has been, where it is now, and where it is going. Is it worth getting? Is petrol-style overpriced?

This is Hideo Kojima's precursor to the fourth installment in the *MGS* series, and, like Peter Jackson, he's saved his best giant elephants for last (that's a metaphor - there are no giant elephants. Sorry). There is no doubt *MGS4* will be amazing, and the trailer is included here, so watch it and weep with joy! But this *MGS* package here is so comprehensive, so complete, so... really, really good.

Like all great special editions, *Subsistence* is a three disc set. And it's chock-full of more

goodies than Jessica Simpson's bikini. It doesn't matter if you've never played a *MGS* game before or if you've conquered *Snake Eater* 50 times just to see every single cut-scene, everyone who plays *Subsistence* will have a hankering for more Snake and this three disc set will be able to provide the hit that you need. This is like the *MGS* Britannica for PS2, and it's worth every hard-earned dollar.

LIKE EATING A SNAKE... ONLY BETTER

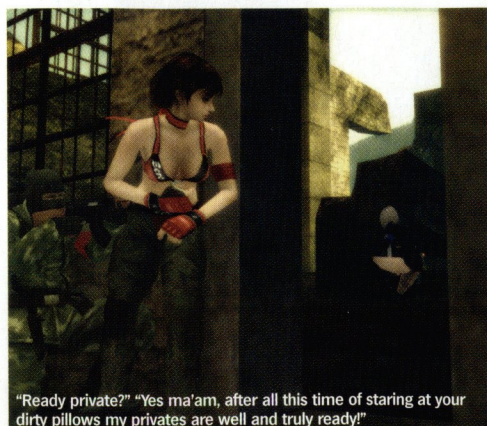
Let's get one thing straight. Yes, this is *MGS 3: Snake Eater* - but consider it a director's cut. There's so much more than a new scene here and there though. Firstly, there are six different difficulty levels, the highest of which, *European Extreme*, means your game is immediately over when you're spotted by a guard. The addition of these extra modes alone is nice but it's the brand new camera system that distinguishes *Subsistence* from *Snake Eater* and makes it worth coughing up the extra dough for. The third-person

viewpoint enables you to experience the environments of *Snake Eater* in their entirety. It's now a lot easier to pan around and get a sense of your surroundings. It's a simple but rewarding addition to the game, especially for those who thought the camera in *Snake Eater* was a bit restrictive.

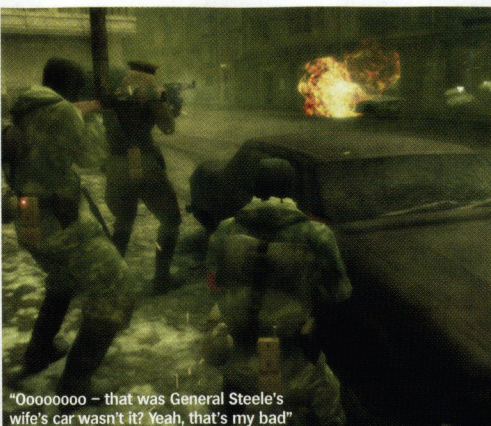
While the story is essentially the same, fans will love the opportunity to re-visit Snake's 1960s incarnation with the new handy cam. Sadly your PS2 saves from the original *Snake Eater* won't work here so you'll have no choice but to re-play it. But rest assured, the new camera does really make this a joy, not a chore.

"THIS IS SNAKE BAUER... GET CHLOE ONLINE NOW!"

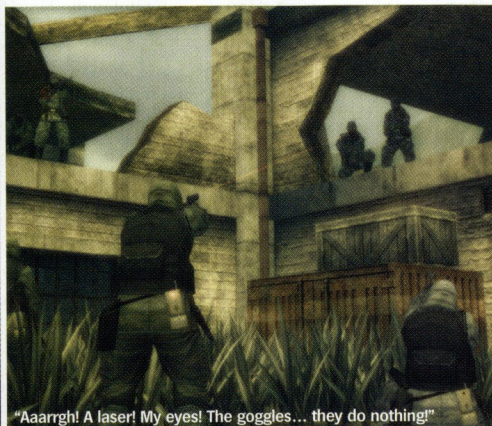
Disc 2, titled *Persistence*, is where the fun begins all over again. First of all, *Metal Gear* finally goes online! Up to eight players can roam through the *Snake Eater* universe with *Deathmatch*, sneaking and capture and rescue missions all there for the taking. Showcasing that trademark *Metal Gear*



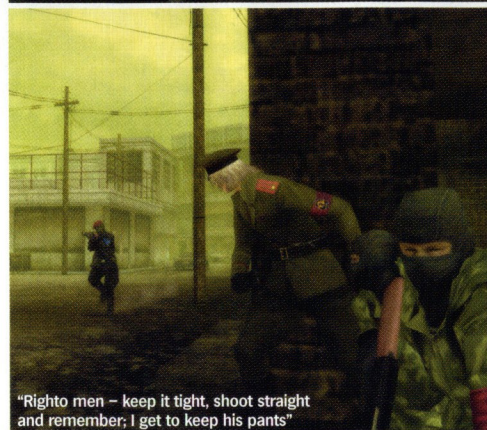
"Ready private?" "Yes ma'am, after all this time of staring at your dirty pillows my privates are well and truly ready!"



"Oooooooooo - that was General Steele's wife's car wasn't it? Yeah, that's my bad"



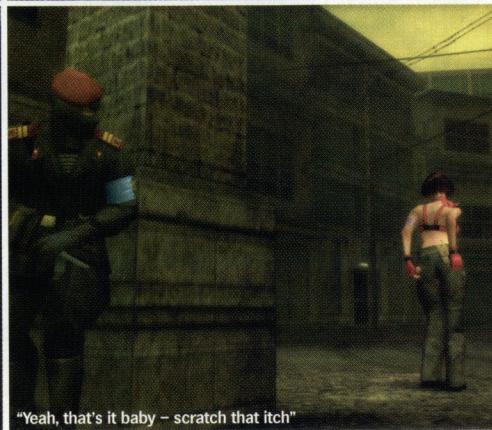
"Aaarrrgh! A laser! My eyes! The goggles... they do nothing!"



"Righto men - keep it tight, shoot straight and remember, I get to keep his pants"



Sneak in the toilets at a World Cup match. He gets edgy when his tackle's hanging out.



"Yeah, that's it baby - scratch that itch"

humour, you don't play "Capture the Flag" - instead it's "Capture the Frog". If you thought *Sneak Eater* was as fun as a one-player adventure, wait until you suit up with your squad and start taking down the bad guys. It's almost like scenes from *TV's 24*, with your own personal CTU squad saving the day.

Persistence also gives you the hilarity of Snake vs Monkey, a minigame who's opening scene alone may be one of the funniest piss-takes in quite a while. There are several new maps to be explored, and it's a great tension-breaker to send Snake on a simian-saving mission if you need a rest from the sometimes overly serious nature of the main game.

RETRO SNAKE

The Persistence Disc also offers up some retro joy with the inclusion of both the original *Metal Gear*, first released in 1987, and its sequel, *Metal Gear 2: Solid Snake* from 1990. Yes, this is where the world was first introduced to FOXHOUND and agent Snake. Now you can learn all about Snake's origins and see for yourself how many of the *Metal Gear* gameplay elements have been there since day one, albeit in primitive form. Now we know what you're thinking - "8-bit games on the PS2? Boring!". Initially we were skeptical too, but both games are so well-designed and playable, you may well be surprised at how addictive they are. The visuals are obviously dated, but these two games serve as a great reminder of how important gameplay itself actually is. You can look pretty, but underneath the surface you need depth... and we'll resist the urge to randomly mention Paris Hilton here. Or not.

Okay, so far, *Subsistence* is a chunky package of meaty goodness that will keep you glued to your DualShock for weeks on end, but surprisingly it offers even more.

Disc 3, titled Existence, wraps up everything nicely. The first stop for many will be the awesome trailer for *MGS4* on PS3. With no pre-rendering and some pants-wettingly glossy visuals, there is no doubt *MGS4* will be one of the most sought after next-gen titles. We see an older, greyer Snake sneaking through a war-torn cityscape. It has been ten years since Big Shell, and Snake, like Danny Glover in *Lethal Weapon*, is definitely feeling "too old for this shit". From the looks of it though, he's still got all the right moves and he still enjoys a smoke. If you can watch this trailer without immediately wanting, needing and must-have a PS3, check your pulse as there may be something seriously wrong with you.

Along with the trailer, you get a director's cut of all of the cut-scenes in *Sneak Eater* edited into one massive three hour movie. *Metal Gear*'s cinematic visuals have always been a trademark of the game ever since it's PlayStation debut, and to see all of *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater*'s scenes together in one uninterrupted experience is a sight to see. Hideo Kojima achieves what many Hollywood movies wish they could - great storytelling combined with mindblowing action and suspense. Even if you've seen some of the scenes a few times before when playing the game, to see them presented in this way is a truly new experience. So grab your popcorn and get comfortable.

After *Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance* we were wondering how many people who bought *Sneak Eater* would fork out the cash for *Subsistence*. But with Hideo Kojima's masterful reworking of the original game and featuring more extras than a *Star Wars* boxset, *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence* is as much as an essential PS2 purchase as a Memory Card. Get it now! **Chris Dzelde**

A SNAKE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Metal Gear Guru Hideo Kojima has stated in interviews that the character designs for Solid Snake and Big Boss were in fact based on Snake Plissken, Kurt Russell's character from both *Escape from New York* and the less successful *Escape from LA* movies. In *Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty*, Snake even adopted the codename "Iroquois Plissken" at one stage. All of which would make you think filmmaker John Carpenter would be primed for some righteous legal action. But he hasn't. Yet.



OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	10	All praise the new camera!
SOUND	99	Solid voice acting and music
GAMEPLAY	10	Even better than <i>MGS3</i>
LIFESPAN	10	These three discs may never leave your system

The last hurrah before *MGS4* arrives is a must-buy, and brilliant value.

10



RACING

FLATOUT 2



Car wreck or simply smashing?

DISTRIBUTOR: RED-ANT ■ DEVELOPER: BUGBEAR ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: NOW ■ WEB: www.flatoutgame.com ■ 60HZ MODE: YES ■ WIDESCREEN: YES ■ SURROUND SOUND: YES ■ ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Founded in 2000, Bugbear Entertainment is an independent studio in Finland, the home of the World Wife Carrying Championships and the birthplace of the Molotov cocktail. It focuses purely on racing games. We also presume Bugbear staff carry their wives to work and set things on fire a lot. What?

LAB TEST

BETTER THAN
FlatOut

WORSE THAN
V8 Supercars 3

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME
Awesome destruction, great track design and superb visuals

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX
More cars on track

Destruction. It's one of man's favourite pastimes – at the very least a close third behind building stuff and looking at boobs. Games have long been an outlet to sate our destructive urges, and *FlatOut 2* is no exception.

Burnout may be currently perched upon the arcade racing throne, poised to turkey slap any would-be usurpers with its highly-tuned hot rod, but not even Criterion's killer app can match *FlatOut 2*'s borderline ridiculous level of destruction.

Is that to say *FlatOut 2* has trumped its EA rival? Not quite.

But it comes achingly close.

FLAT CHAT

FlatOut 2 doesn't stray far from the formula of the original, although it does expand on it significantly. *FlatOut 2* introduces a horde of new locations to race in from backwater cornfields to T2-style storm drains, deserted aeroplane graveyards to forest lumber mills, city streets to race circuits under renovation. You'll also find a smattering of new destruction derby arenas and

special circuits with four-way jumps and shared straights. Every one is littered with thousands of breakable objects – fences can be splintered, fuel bowlers incinerated, dead trees toppled, signs smashed and barns barged. If you can see it, there's a good chance you can destroy it. The massive level of interactivity with the tracks makes *FlatOut 2* unique amongst its peers. It's not really just window dressing either. Pulverise a pile of logs and they'll become an obstacle for you, and your seven opponents, next lap.

It also introduces a wider variety of cars, from rusted old bombs cobbled together from junkyard parts (complete with improvised exhausts that jut from the bonnet) to gleaming new sports cars that bleed speed and ooze street cred. Every one of them can be torn to shreds, bouncing around *FlatOut 2*'s tracks leaving behind a wake of fenders, panels and glass thanks to some extraordinary damage modeling. It's also worth noting this time around you can purchase multiple cars for your garage and upgrade their strength and performance at your own leisure. Unlike the original you'll even uncover some tasty bonus cars, like a

school bus or a ballistic, Batman-style supercar appropriately dubbed the Flatmobile.

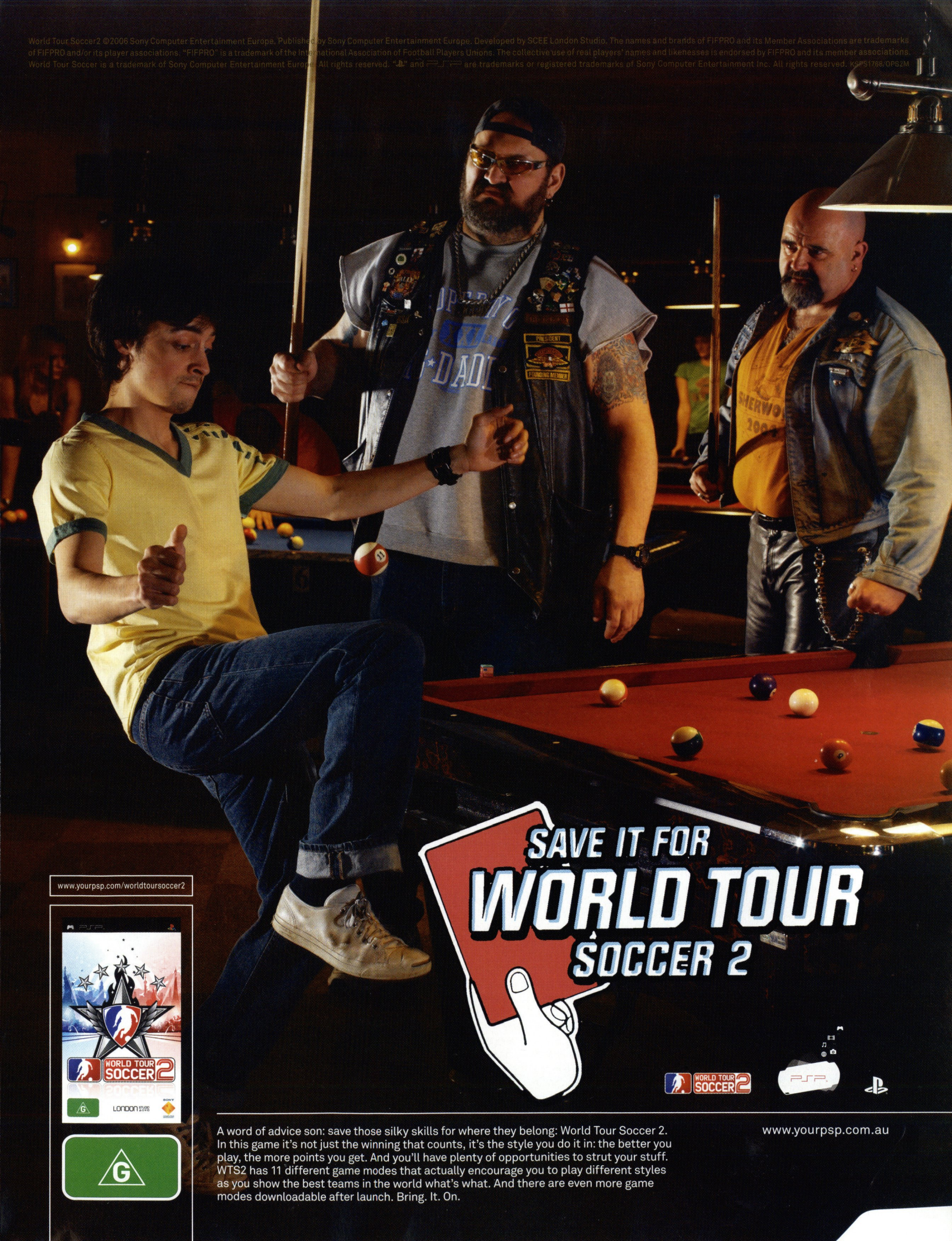
The handling which was a sticking point with some critics despite generally glowing reviews

ROCK 'N' ROLL RACING

Anyone remember Bach's 'Air on the G string' appearing on the *Gran Turismo 4* soundtrack? Scorching around a track to the strains of classical music never really did it for us (the only air on the G string we really want to hear is a slight whistle as they fly through the air after we've ripped them off Jessica Alba with our teeth). Anyway, *FlatOut 2*'s soundtrack is surprisingly good, featuring far more gems than you'd expect to find after years of half-arsed tracklists. You'll be thrashing, smashing and crashing to the likes of Megadeth, Mötley Crüe, Audioslave, Fall Out Boy and Aussie rockers The Vines and Wolfmother. Rock on!

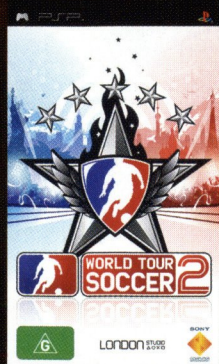


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Play-test



That's right... you have to drive it into the ring. Wait a second...



"Hey baby, ever been rammed from behind?" Solid Joel



"Let's get married, Bob. We can't ignore the sparks between us..."



"Help me, I don't want to be pinned down" Boom-tish

of the original, has remained largely the same – although it feels marginally tighter. We understand that slightly spongy, *Driver*-esque driving physics aren't to everyone's taste, but the fact that every powerslide has the potential to turn into a deadly spin, and that most of *FlatOut 2*'s rides are prone to oversteer like a bitch, makes it all the more rewarding to tame. Screaming down a muddy, tree-lined track, fishtailing wildly, you never quite feel in total control – but we like it like that. It's a refreshing antidote to the rail-like handling of the *Burnout* games. The good news is that you'll rarely be the only one careening off the track in a cloud of debris because the AI racers are almost as likely as you to screw up. It's not uncommon to see an out-of-control opponent barrel rolling down a hill, or getting the death-wobbles before slamming into an embankment.

The patented ragdoll minigames make a triumphant reappearance, even more bizarre than ever. For the uninitiated, *FlatOut*'s minigames are not unlike *Burnout*'s Crash Mode – a crazy diversion from actual racing. The difference is that *FlatOut*'s minigames involve firing your driver through the windscreen as high, far or accurately as possible. Some of *FlatOut*'s better events return, like bowling and high jump (although the latter is now a bit of a dud thanks to a change in the formula) but more than half the events are brand new. You'll need to guide your rocketing driver into soccer goals, through blazing rings and fire and into giant paying cards. We're not huge fans of Bugbear's habit of placing obstacles on the run-up to the launch area, which can be particularly tricky to navigate in *FlatOut 2*'s new specialised jet-propelled stunt cars, but the mode itself is hugely entertaining and supports up to eight players passing the one controller.

FLAT BROKE

However, despite all the fun we were having we still have some minor complaints. Firstly, it's tough to win AND

smash as many trackside items as possible. The reason is that while plowing through fences, telegraph poles, trees and all manner of rubbish and debris earns you boost, or 'nitro', it also tends to slow you down – sometimes significantly (especially when a rogue piece of timber makes you lose control and sends you hurtling into the forest). Hence, instead of being able to use your nitro to blast into first place, you usually need it to reclaim the positions you just lost. Of course, you can earn more nitro by shunting your opponents and ramming them off the road, which is hugely satisfying and actively encouraged. A hit to the rear panel will spin them out, and a chunky T-bone at speed will flip them over. The crashes fall a little short of being as spectacular as *Burnout*'s famous takedowns, and it's hard to concentrate on completely wrecking an opponent during a race and still make the podium, but they're gnarly nonetheless.

There's also a little inconsistency in the way obstacles are treated. We were mildly disappointed that on one track a large rock might be scuttled like a soccer ball, but an equally hefty log will throw you severely off course. On another you might be able to slam through a barn door, but not through the wall of a similar building.

Finally, the online mode we were expecting has been pruned from the PAL release. We're not sure why it didn't make the cut, but honestly we were having that much fun we almost didn't notice.

Ignore it at your own peril, but *FlatOut 2* has accelerated the fledgling series doorhandle-to-doorhandle with the big boys. This is no bargain-bin racer, it's a more-than-worthy companion to the likes of industry heavyweights like *Burnout Revenge*, *V8 Supercars 3* and *Need for Speed Most Wanted*. If the original *FlatOut* was cocking the hammer, *FlatOut 2* is a warning shot for racing game developers everywhere. The series has truly arrived, and there's still plenty of gas in the tank. **— Luke Reilly**

BOOM CRASH OPERA

To really nail the sounds of *FlatOut 2*'s bone-crunching collisions and teeth-rattling T-bones Bugbear enlisted audio guru Greg Hill from Melbourne-based Soundwave Concepts [www.soundwaveconcepts.com.au]. We caught up with Greg for a glimpse of what happens behind the scenes.



OPS2: What lengths did you have to go to in order to capture the sounds of *FlatOut 2*'s bone-crunching collisions?

GH: To match the visual calamity of *FlatOut 2*, we needed tremendously over-the-top impact sounds. The first hurdle was finding a scrap yard that would facilitate such a thing.

The second was to gather the tools required to create the myriad impact sounds required, the crash test dummy included.

When on-site, we then systematically went through the extensive collisions list using all the cars and objects available to us. We cut loose with sledgehammers, mallets, metal bars, planks, barrels, steel cylinders... you name it! Before we started welding unrelenting damage the cars actually looked half decent and a shame to break, but we got over all that after the first panel got destroyed.

OPS2: Most blokes have to be content with a childhood of smashing Matchbox cars in the yard with a hammer – was it a hoot pulverising cars with huge machines or was it strictly business?

GH: The fun factor was definitely there, and at a level beyond normal experience. Watching the big machines set up the cars – like huge hands – for Head-ons and T-bones and then smashing them beyond recognition was like an initial gasp of horror followed by hysterical laughter. We were extremely professional about conducting the session, there were strict safety procedures and two-way communication with the heavy machinery operators to tell them what we wanted, and they delivered it in spades. It was definitely the most fun I have had recording crash sounds on location. At times it was completely mesmerising watching these machines mutilate with sheer ease what we generally view as a strong and safe means of transport.

OPS2: And how about this vegetable crash test dummy we've been hearing about – whose stroke of genius was that?

GH: I know from Foley experience that it is common to use potatoes to recreate the sound of a human body hitting various surfaces. It ends up being a similar weight and great for flexibility when recreating the likes of human bone wrapped in flesh. My studio assistant Penny is also pretty handy with a sewing machine so she made it all happen. As you can imagine it was pretty heavy and it had limbs with joints sewn in to give the right series of thumps necessary for impact with panels, windshields and the ground. Pretty gruesome task actually but no tomato sauce needed with these vegetables!



OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	05	Great effects, highly detailed tracks – AAA stuff
SOUND	08	Rockin' soundtrack, meaty sound effects
GAMEPLAY	05	So much fun it's difficult to turn it off
LIFESPAN	08	Longer career mode and multiplayer beckons

Gritty, uncompromising, fast, aggressive and totally addictive – one of the PS2's best, and most unique, racing games.

09

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First test
KRAZY!
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PAGE 61



**Blu-ray:
it's here!**
Sony's HD
notebook
reviewed
PAGE 58

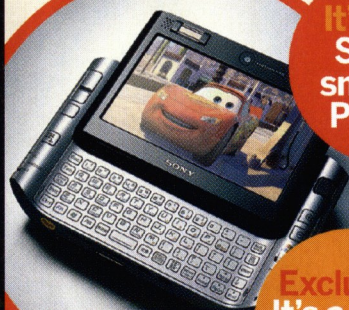
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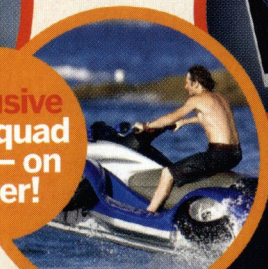
Plus: 57 ways to make the
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**Camera
killer**
Five-meg
photos from
a phone!
PAGE 12



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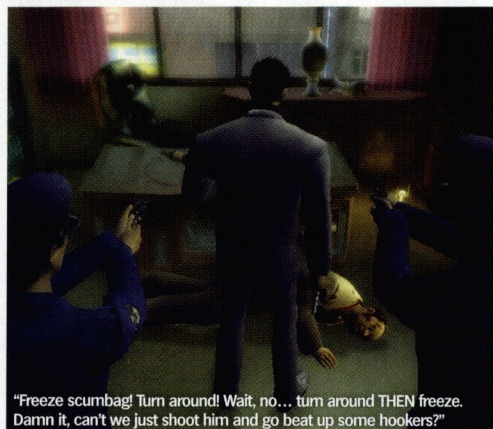
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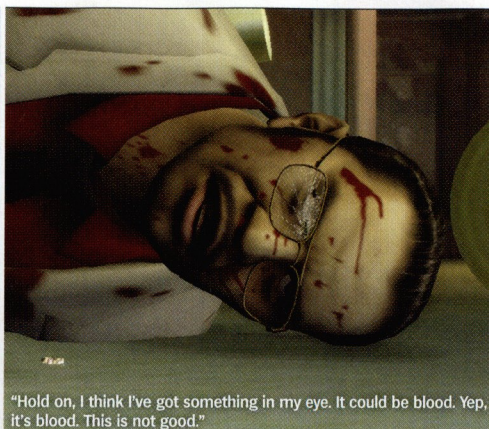
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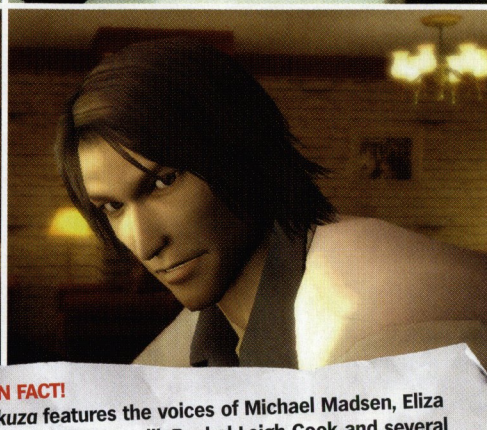
"Freeze scumbag! Turn around! Wait, no... turn around THEN freeze. Damn it, can't we just shoot him and go beat up some hookers?"



"Hold on, I think I've got something in my eye. It could be blood. Yep, it's blood. This is not good."



"Come on fellas - cheer up. How about a threesome? That'll turn those frowns upside down, won't it? Yeah... see?"



FUN FACT!

Yakuza features the voices of Michael Madsen, Eliza Dushku, Mark Hamill, Rachel Leigh Cook and several other actors who aren't Japanese. Weird.

✖ BEAT 'EM UP

YAKUZA

Thumbs up or thumbs off?

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: SEGA ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.sega.com ■ 60HZ MODE: YES ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: NO ■ ONLINE: NO

✖ BACK STORY

Yakuza was a smash hit in Japan when it was released there in 2005. SEGA reportedly spent US \$21 million developing the game, making it one of the most expensive PS2 games ever made. A large part of that may or may have not been used to keep actual *Yakuza* members quiet.

✖ LAB TEST

BETTER THAN
The Godfather

WORSE THAN
The Warriors

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

Great graphics, compelling storyline, use of the f-word

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

The camera and the combat

It's a tough life when you're a *Yakuza* gang member in the neon-soaked mean streets of Tokyo, Japan. It's a life in which having eight fingers is a bonus because it means you've still got seven spares. It's a place where you can finger paint using someone's actual finger as the brush, and their blood as the paint. If someone asks you for your digits in a nightclub, chances are they're not talking about your phone number. And if you piss off your boss, you get a disciplinary rap across the knuckles... with a sharpened katana blade.

In SEGA's *Yakuza*, you step into the shoes (and fingerless gloves, presumably) of Kazuma Kiryu, a *Yakuza* member who is forced to take the rap for murdering his boss in order to protect the real killers; his two best friends. Talk about doing your mates a favour - thrown into the slammer for a crime you didn't commit only to become the cold fish in an all-male sushi roll with your cellmate every night? A case of beer is most certainly not going to call it even.

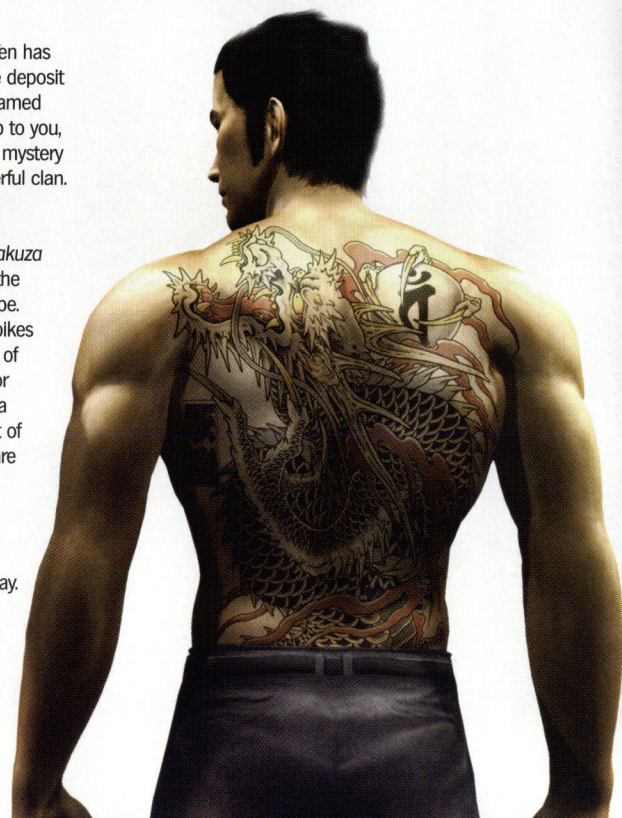
Ten years later Kazuma is out on parole, only to find the landscape of the Nippon underworld

has changed dramatically - 10 billion Yen has been stolen from the *Yakuza* clan's safe deposit box and only a mysterious young girl named Haruka knows who's responsible. It's up to you, as Kazuma, to get to the bottom of the mystery and restore balance to your once powerful clan.

STREETS OF RAGE

It might look a bit like *GTA: Tokyo*, but *Yakuza* doesn't really come close to matching the brilliant Rockstar series in terms of scope. For example, there are a few cars and bikes present in the Shinjuku-inspired streets of the game's setting, but you can't drive or ride any of them and the gameplay area itself is comparatively small next to that of each of the *GTA* games, although they are impressively detailed.

You spend the entire game on foot, traipsing from one location to the next and getting stung by plenty of *Final Fantasy*-style random battles on your way. Usually you'll come upon a mugger or rival gang member in an alley, and then the unavoidable fisticuffs begin (often



frustratingly when you've got millimetres of health and you're twenty minutes from your last save). The combat, at least initially, is woefully repetitive. You have a light attack, a heavy attack and a grab move to rough your opponents up with, but you can also snatch up a number of items from your surroundings to use as weapons. Thus you can beat the baddies' brains out with bicycles, slap them silly with street signs or Happy Gilmore their arses with golf clubs. Cue the corny, deadpan post mortem one liner ("What happened to Johnny?" "He got a bit tee'd off").

But despite the fact you can expand your combos as you level up with experience points, the fights still become stale after a while – at least until later in the game when you get your hands on goodies such as stun guns, grenades and scimitars. Even then, there's no hiding the fact that the game's enemy lock-on system simply doesn't work and often leaves you frustratingly kicking and punching right past your enemies until your combo animation ends and you can right yourself before you're bitch-slapped in the back of the head.

Unfortunately there aren't any moves that allow you to fight more than one enemy at a time ala *Path of Neo*, and so in that regard the combat is no more advanced than *Final Fight* or *Streets of Rage*; games that we were playing more than a decade ago. And does it strike anyone else as weird that so few of the supposedly badass gangsters that you fight in the game have guns? What, have their trigger fingers been cut off? What kind of self-respecting Yakuza goon is about as well armed as the drummer from Def Leppard? Although we must admit we got a laugh out of the shotgun-toting transsexual stripper assassin you come up against early in the game (yes, she's happy to see you AND she's got a gun in her pocket... and, a penis).

SOME KILLER, PLENTY FILLER

When you're not laying the smackdown, you're typically wading through pages of on screen dialogue and cut-scenes. It's not always a bad thing, and the gratuitous use of swear words often results in laugh-out-loud moments, although whether they're intentional or not is debatable. Fortunately the storyline itself is actually quite good, throwing up plenty of twists and turns along the way – but just beware that although the game provides 15-20 hours of gameplay to complete the main story, the actual hands-on action takes a slight backseat to the storytelling for the bulk of the experience.

Yakuza is undoubtedly one of the most graphically impressive PS2 titles we've seen this year, but perhaps as a result of the detail rich environments there are jarring pauses every time you traverse from one area of the map to another and the game has to switch camera perspectives. Meanwhile the manual camera during the fight sequences is equally frustrating; you can't actually move it with the right thumbstick, you can only centre it by pressing **X**, which is pretty unwieldy in practice.

The bottom line is that *Yakuza* provides a truly compelling and at times surprisingly dark story set within Tokyo's intriguing underworld, but the actual combat itself – aside from the stylish slow motion finishing moves and abundance of inanimate objects-cum-weapons – leaves a lot to be desired on account of the extremely unreliable lock-on controls and the 'take it in turns' nature of the fights with multiple enemies. Organised crime fans will be satisfied by what is certainly a unique setting within the genre, but anyone just after some solid scrapping would be far better served with a copy of *The Warriors* instead. **A** *Tristan Ogilvie*

HOT SAKE?

When you're not cracking the skulls of your enemies or smacking balls in the baseball cage, you can try and reach the other kind of home base with the lovely ladies at one of the local hostess clubs. But alas, *Hot Coffee* fans are in for disappointment – you don't actually get to get it on with the escorts. Instead you just buy them drinks and food and put up with their awkward attempts at conversation for absolutely no reward. Sounds familiar eh, Paul? Yes, it's okay to cry (pfft, it's totally not. No wonder you can't get laid).



X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	09	Detailed and polished
SOUND	08	Often hilarious profanity
GAMEPLAY	07	Slightly clunky combat
LIFESPAN	08	Solid adventure and side quests

A gripping story well told, but the action misses more than it hits, literally.

07



October marks the release of a brand new expansion to the highly successful *Magic: The Gathering* play cards. *Time Spiral* will unleash itself on the world to the millions of players and you can be a part of it all through the www.magicthegathering.com website. To commemorate the launch of *Magic the Gathering: Time Spiral*, we're giving 12 lucky readers the chance to win a special *Time Spiral* pack that includes:

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- A *Magic the Gathering: Time Spiral* deck box



To score one of these super packs simply tell us how many black bordered cards there are in *Time Spiral* and where is the best place to play it? Mark your entries as 'Time Spiral' giveaway and see page 14 for details.



✕ FLIGHT SIMULATOR

ACE COMBAT ZERO: THE BELKAN WAR



How we love the smell of dogfights in the morning!

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: NAMCO ■ PRICE: \$99.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: NO ■ WEB: acecombatzero.namco.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: YES ■ ONLINE: NO

✕ BACK STORY

Namco's Ace Combat series has been a favourite with gamers since the mid '90s. Fans have been screaming for a multi-player option for years, and this time round we finally get it!

The Ace Combat series has always been a favourite among flight sim fans. If you were pining for some flight action but didn't have access to a high-end PC, Ace Combat always managed to meet your expectations. As the years and sequels have gone by, Namco has wisely realised that such a solid gaming experience doesn't need much tweaking, and Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War is just that: un-tweaked, but still a very sharp flyer.

More than 30 licensed aircraft have been packed into the new Ace Combat, all with sharply detailed visuals and convincing flight physics. Once again a perfect mix of flight-sim and arcade action is on offer, and this time round enemy AI has been nicely boosted. Enemies may co-operate and hunt together in packs to take you down, and when rival aces appear mid-mission in their beefed-up fighters, you'd better hope your banking skills have nothing to do with the local ATM or you'll end up as toast. Whether you're taking out ground installations, speeding towards a phalanx of fighters, or just showing-off to your wingman, Ace Combat zips along at a pretty impressive frame rate, and aviation nuts (you know who you are!) are bound to be equally impressed by the detail on the fighters themselves. Adding to the immersive quality is the radio chatter back and forth between your allies and rivals during dogfights, although the dialogue is sometimes

so corny it's a wonder small yellow bits don't get stuck in your teeth. They'll be taking notice of your style and ability too, so be prepared for some nasty backchat if you're skills aren't up to speed, and how you choose to approach each objective will affect how the game plays out. Should you get your wingmen to do the dirty work while you approach from another angle? Or do you go all Zinedine Zidane and try the head-on approach?

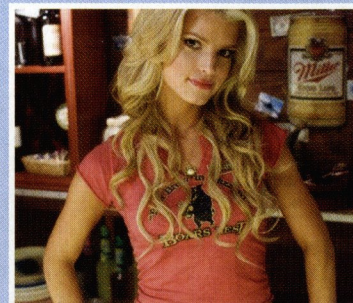
For those who buckled up for Ace Combat 5, prepare to get a slight tear in the fabric of the space-time continuum as the new Ace Combat takes place 15 years before the previous game. Time-frame aside, Ace Combat provides a considerable challenge, and the inclusion of aggressive rival aces will no doubt have you cursing at your television screen from time to time.

Beefing up the lifespan of the game this time round is the addition of a multiplayer mode and, although it's only two-player split-screen, it provides a hangar full of good times, mixing it up with some nicely varied missions and scenarios. It's a perfect opportunity to have a mate over and try and see how many lines from Top Gun you can still remember. (A further option is to crank Kenny Loggins 'Danger Zone' up on the stereo. But if you do have Kenny Loggins in your CD collection, maybe your mate's better off not knowing).

With great presentation and a challenging degree of difficulty, Ace Combat Zero: The Belkan War will have you grasping your throttle firmly – and loving it! **✕ Chris Dzelde**

IF IT AIN'T BROKE....

Fans of the Ace Combat series might moan that there ain't much difference between this and the last outing. But they won't moan much – the enemy AI improvement alone is worth checking out (and cursing at!). And besides, if you're really a fan, why would you moan? There are better things to moan about, like Jessica Simpson's... er... boots.



✕ LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Ace Combat 5

WORSE THAN

Actually being in Top Gun

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

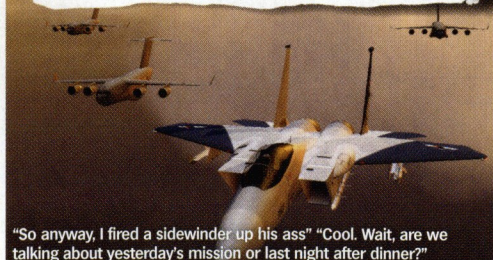
The rush of wind and adrenaline

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

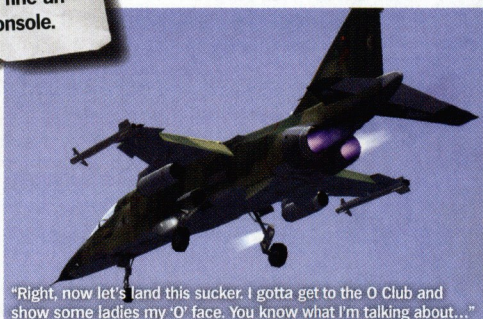
The all-too-powerful rival aces

FUN FACT!

Don't let anyone tell you the PS2 has run out of steam! Ace Combat's impressive design and dogged AI are as fine an example of flying prowess as you'll find on ANY console.



"So anyway, I fired a sidewinder up his ass" "Cool. Wait, are we talking about yesterday's mission or last night after dinner?"



"Right, now let's land this sucker. I gotta get to the O Club and show some ladies my 'O' face. You know what I'm talking about..."



"Mustang, this is Maverick requesting flyby" "That's a negative Ghost Rider, the pattern is full"



✕ OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Feel the rush – nicely detailed
SOUND	07	Think Top Gun
GAMEPLAY	08	Challenging, addictive
LIFESPAN	08	Lots of aircraft to get crafty with

Not for everyone, but the best of its kind. Fans of flight will flip.

08

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Exclusive to
PlayStation®2

BEWARE OF THE NINJA



shinobido-game.com

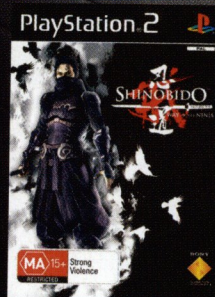


You visit silent, speedy death on your victims. Your stealth is legendary. You sell your skills to the highest bidder. You would laugh at the concept of mercy, but you don't laugh. Ever. You are a ninja for hire, and the game is Shinobido:™ Way of the Ninja exclusive to PlayStation®2.

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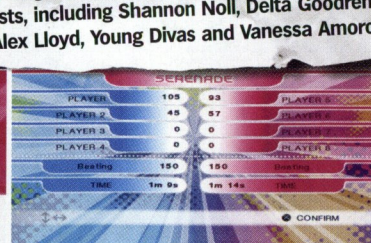
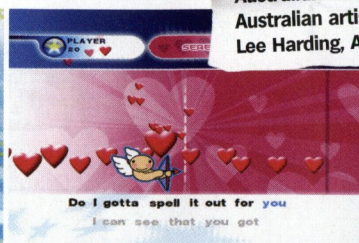
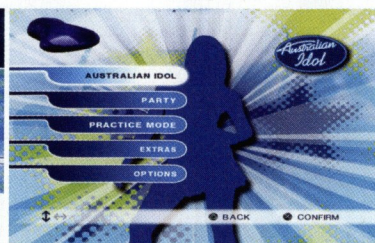
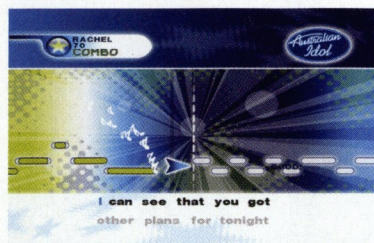
spike

PS



FUN FACT!

Australian Idol Sing's roster is comprised wholly of Australian artists, including Shannon Noll, Delta Goodrem, Lee Harding, Alex Lloyd, Young Divas and Vanessa Amorosi.



PARTY

AUSTRALIAN IDOL SING

Touchdown?

DISTRIBUTOR: RED ANT ■ DEVELOPER: MILESTONE ■ PRICE: \$99.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-8 ■ OUT: NOW ■ WEB: www.red-ant.com.au ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: NO ■ ONLINE: NO

Australian Idol – the show that brought us Guy Sebastian, Shannon Noll, what's-her-face and you know, that chick that won last time.

Now admittedly, the Australian Idol presentation is a bit naff – but that's because we're 20-something-year-old blokes who prefer The Screaming Jets to Shakaya. The real audience for Australian Idol Sing is decidedly younger (and has far less facial hair).

The game itself functions precisely like SingStar – you sing into the Logitech mic that comes bundled with the game (SingStar mics won't work) and you're scored on how well you sing. Simple really. Australian Idol even uses an almost identical on-screen display.

It's main strength is that it takes the bulk of what's

great about SingStar and pitches it to a younger audience. You'll even get judge's comments after each performance. Perform well and Mark will speak in gibberish, suck and Kyle will tell you you're fat. Or something like that. Australian Idol also features a swag of quick-burst minigames, perfect for short attention spans.

The problem is that, unlike SingStar, it doesn't feature simultaneous multiplayer. The other unfortunate thing is that there aren't any clips included as you sing, so everything starts to look a little stale after a while.

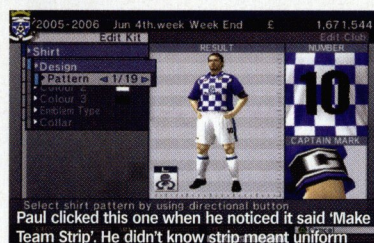
Overall it's arguably a better game than the recent SingStar Anthems, and it's almost as much fun as Sony's karaoke king. It just needs a few tweaks before it can really measure up to its inspiration. **— Luke Reilly**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	05	Good presentation, although no clips
SOUND	08	The pop fluff sounds great if it's your bag
GAMEPLAY	08	As good as SingStar, no simultaneous two-player
LIFESPAN	05	Minigames ahoy, less tracks than most SingStars

More a SingStar companion that a replacement, but Idol fans should find plenty to like.

07



SPORTS MANAGEMENT

LET'S MAKE A SOCCER TEAM!

Just don't pick the guy with the glasses

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ DEVELOPER: SEGA ■ PRICE: \$69.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1 ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.sega.com ■ 60HZ MODE: NO ■ WIDESCREEN: NO ■ SURROUND SOUND: NO ■ ONLINE: NO

Ever thought your local club team could match it with Manchester United or your little league team could smoke those Spaniards? Well, Let's Make a Soccer Team! allows you to create a team from scratch and take them to the big leagues.

Creating a team isn't as simple as grabbing a bunch of players and getting them out on the field. LMAT! goes deeper and requires you to appoint staff to various positions, design uniforms and even build a stadium.

Menus are very easy to navigate through so setting up your team is a cinch. While there are plenty of options to choose from in LMAT! there are few menus, so finding what you're after only takes a matter of minutes.

There's even a story to add a bit of drama to the

game. Your team is going down the drain and you have to prove yourself in the English, French, Dutch, Italian, German or Spanish leagues. If you fail, a rival club will buy you out.

Unfortunately, like most soccer management sims, watching the actual game is quite boring. Especially since the only control you have is through menus. At least it's in 3D, unlike Championship Manager.

Let's Make a Soccer Team! may have a rubbish name, but it's also got official licenses, real players and more options than the new Commodore. If you're into management sims pick it up, but if you like to play soccer as well, stick to Pro Evolution Soccer 5, which features it as an individual mode. **— Paul Frew**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	05	As nice as menus can be
SOUND	05	Generic elevator tunes
GAMEPLAY	08	Deep but simple to navigate
LIFESPAN	07	Plenty of options for your second go

A fine soccer management sim but it won't appeal to all the football fans out there.

08



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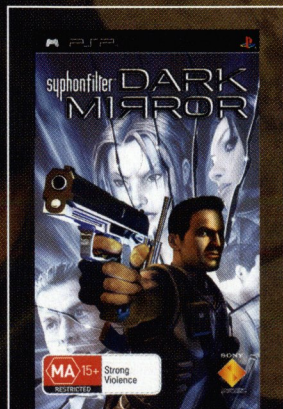
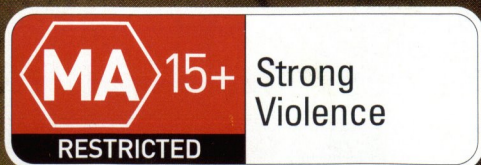
9.3/10 'Outstanding'
– IGN.com

yourpsp.com/darkmirror



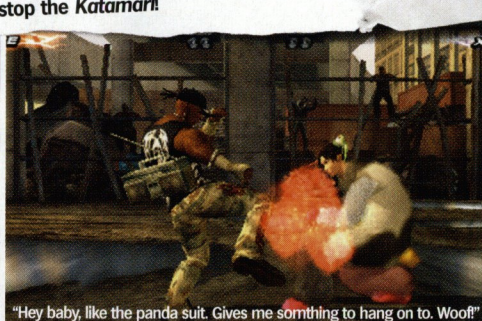
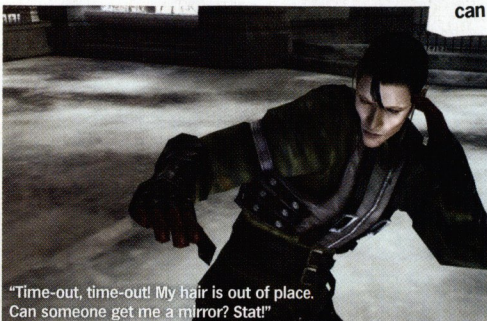
Officially, it never happened.

You do not exist. Your mission does not exist. You are not operating within normal rules of engagement. Locate and destroy Project Dark Mirror in 30 explosive, heart-pounding stealth missions using the latest high-tech weaponry and gadgets. The world doesn't know it, but it's counting on you.



FUN FACT!

You can unlock a Prince of All Cosmos headpiece for Lili in a little nod to *Katamari Damacy*. Namco, you tease. Nothing can stop the *Katamari*!



✗ BEAT 'EM UP

TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION



Prepare for an iron fisting...

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: NAMCO ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 (AD-HOC & GAMESHARE) ■ OUT: NOW ■ WEB: www.yourpsp.com.au

✗ BACK STORY

Saying you haven't heard of the Tekken series is like saying you haven't slept. It's been around since 1994 and has evolved into one of the greatest fighters to ever grace the PlayStation. We can't say the same for its spinoff *Death by Degrees* but hey, everyone makes mistakes.

Tekken: *Dark Resurrection* takes most of the content from *Tekken 5* on the PS2, crams in two new characters (see IT'S MY FIRST TIME), features new online components and an expanded RPG-esque backbone that allows you to earn money and buy an expanded range of items and costumes.

This currency system is not exactly new to the genre (money, skill points, experience – it's all to the same effect), but it's nice to be rewarded for taking the time to conquer *Dark Resurrection's* many modes.

Dark Resurrection wisely includes a quick-play mode for time-killing frays, in addition to the standard story, arcade and practise modes. Solid progression through these modes will unlock yet others. Tekken Bowling makes a slightly garish return – but in pocket format, this and several other mini-games make very pleasant distractions.

Tekken Dojo, another welcome inclusion, pits you against simulated players vying to improve their rank and win-to-loss ratio – a ratio that is persistent throughout most of the game's modes. You can also download the recorded ghosts of top Tekken players and face off against them in here.

Gold Battle is a survival-style mode that rewards you with money for each blow you land on your opponent. It feels a little tacked-on, considering you can potentially earn much more simply by competing in the main modes, and you

lose any money you've accrued for the round if you get knocked out.

That minor gripe aside, the core game remains unchanged. The game runs at a consistent 60 frames per second, meaning the combat remains fluid and the careful animation really shines.

It's also stunningly beautiful. The icy arctic twilight stage in particular is gorgeous – characters' breath hangs in the air as the aurora borealis shifts overhead.

However, for all the fisticuff goodness, lavish cut-scenes and visual eye-poppage, *Dark Resurrection* makes a couple notable missteps. The online modes are a little limited in scope – there is no two-player online play, which is a feature that would fit like a studded glove. Instead, players can exchange ghost data of their fighters. It's just not the same as working your way to the top of a global Iron Fist Tournament, though.

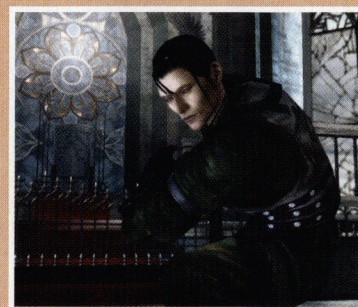
The PSP's recessed D-pad makes diagonal movement a pain, and the nub feels imprecise.

Ad-hoc multiplayer and gamesharing capabilities mean that your buddies don't necessarily need to fork out for a copy of the game in order to have a bit of biff. Not that they shouldn't invest – really, the only reason you might want to let this one pass by is if you've played *Tekken 5* to death already.

For everyone else, *Tekken: Dark Resurrection* is a top-notch fighter that adds another jewel to the series' crown. **A** Patrick Kolan

IT'S MY FIRST TIME

Somebody's been breaking the first two rules of Fight Club, because I see a couple new faces: Sergei Dragunov and Lili. Dragunov has that same dead-eyed, thousand yard stare of someone who's seen a lot of action. Lili is the daughter of a very wealthy family from Monaco. She's kind of generic, but thanks to some satisfying jiggle technology, well, she's got spunk.



✗ LAB TEST

BETTER THAN
Darkstalkers Chronicle

WORSE THAN
Street Fighter Alpha 3 MAX

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME
The best looking game on PSP

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX
Controls are a little off

✗ OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	10	The best the PSP has seen
SOUND	09	Loud and lively music
GAMEPLAY	09	Fun, varied and challenging
LIFESPAN	09	Loads of modes and unlockables

Better late than never, Tekken on PSP gives us a dark... erection

09

FUN FACT!

Not only did he do the 2006 remake but Michael Mann cut his teeth on the less-camp-than-you-remember '80s original telly series.



X ACTION

MIAMI VICE: THE GAME

Freeze or we'll "reimagine" you in 20 years!



DISTRIBUTOR: VIVENDI ■ DEVELOPER: REBELLION ■ PRICE: \$69.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-2 ■ OUT: NOW

If we didn't know this PSP shooter was based on a Michael Mann movie we probably would have mentioned it looks like a Michael Mann movie, such is the distinctive graphical effect. Like Mann's visually minimalist flicks (*The Keep* and *Heat* spring to mind), *Vice* looks washed out, eerie but very pretty all the same. Like *Tiffany*.

At the start of the game you get to choose between playing as Crockett or Tubbs and from then on it's pure *Vice* City. Erm, sorry, *MIAMI Vice*.

Comparisons between this and *GTA* are going to be made (we just made one!) so let's get 'em out: yes, it's a third-person shooter. Yes, you deal with drugs and various scumbags. This is a whole lot grittier than *Liberty City Stories*, however, with mini-games that actually involve the buying and selling of drugs to break up the combat intensive missions.

There are also some missions in a speedboat but these are so short and simple they kind of feel like last minute additions. And don't even get us started on the dodgy hacking mini-games. They're Atari-2600-tastic.

The meat of *Vice* is in the walk, stalk and shooting and although they're hardly revolutionary, the aiming and maiming mechanic is one of the most solid we've seen for the PSP.

Falling somewhere between *GTA: LCS* and *Splinter Cell Essentials* missions are made up of walking through environments, shooting bad guys and collecting drugs obscurely left in pot plants.

How any of the bullet blasting carry on is even vaguely "undercover" is never really dealt with. Certainly between missions you can exchange drugs and cash for information in the upcoming environment – which translates as map prompts – but that's about the extent of it.

Not that you're looking for a strategy game hiding under the *Miami Vice* banner. This is about what you expect: a solid, pretty-looking shooter that starts to impress and then ends a tad too quickly.

Still, if you need something to tide you over until *GTA: Vice City Stories* gets here, *Miami Vice* may be the surprising indulgence you're looking for. **A Anthony O'Connor**

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Nice and atmospheric with some chunky blood FX
SOUND	07	Solid but a little uninspired. Where are those classic '80s hits?
GAMEPLAY	06	Shoot. Hide. Upgrade gun. Shoot. Repeat.
LIFESPAN	06	Mini-games add some spark but it's quite short, really, with little or no replay value.

A chunky slice of shootin' goodness, that could have stood being twice the length, but is fun while it lasts.



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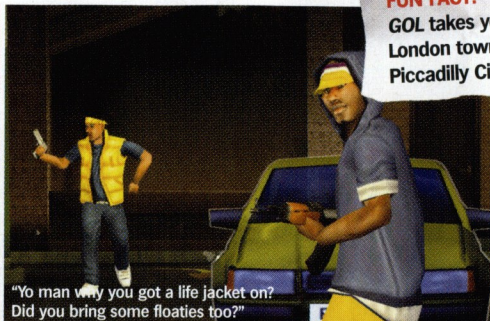


*Terms and conditions apply, available at www.befree2go.com.au

PSP Play-test



"You looking for Big Ben, baby? Let me show you my ding dong" [unzipping sound]



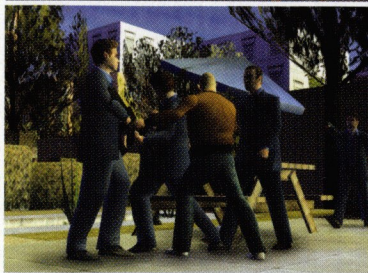
"Yo man why you got a life jacket on? Did you bring some floaties too?"

FUN FACT!

GOL takes you through a fairly faithful recreation of old London town. Hit free roam and see the sights, just avoid Piccadilly Circus. We hear it's a pretty crappy circus!



Cue Benny Hill music



X ACTION

GANGS OF LONDON

You orright then geezer?



DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ DEVELOPER: LONDON STUDIOS ■ PRICE: \$79.95 ■ PLAYERS: 1-5 (1-2 WI-FI) ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ WEB: www.yourpsp.com.au

X BACK STORY

London Studios was the obvious choice to handle *Gangs of London*, considering its previous experience on *The Getaway: Black Monday*. *Gangs* uses the same model of London (scaled down of course) as was used in *Black Monday*. The team already had a 25-mile template to expand on so it made sense.

When you think about the London underworld, well, it's romanticised portrayal in popular media anyway, and its criminal network, several images just can't help but stand out. Ben Kingsley in *Sexy Beast* demonstrated the no nonsense, never-take-no-for-an-answer attitude we've come to know and love, while Vinnie Jones was channelling his on-the-field aggression into retrieval expert Bullet Tooth Tony in *Guy Ritchie's Snatch* (and we don't mean Madonna). And don't even get us started on Brick-Top. English gangsters are the business. Those smooth talking, smile at you one second, Liverpool kiss you through a window the next, hard as nails bastards. Yet in gaming their reputation is a little soft. Sony is hoping to change all that with *Gangs of London*.

GOL centres on a turf war between five rival gangs, all vying for power in the heart of London, funnily enough. You choose between the Morris Kane Firm (prep school white boys), Talwar Bros. (Pakistani crew, Ali G style), Zakharov Organization (crazy ass Russians), Water Dragon Triads (needs no explanation) and the EC2 Crew (psychotic Jamaican bad boys). We highly recommend using the EC2 Crew first off. They're not particularly stronger than any of the others, but it's more than a little funny listening to the Rastafi going crazy Yardie style. Who knows, you may even start slinging around some Yardie slang like "Whappon? Who ze ya deal wid bumbo-clot? Dredlock ragamuffin won ded?" We believe it's an insult and death threat, the jury's still out on that one. But we digress... on with

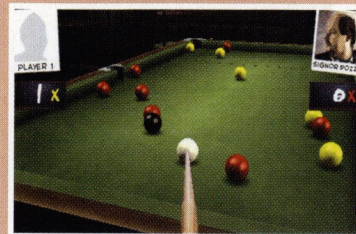
the show. The game is completely devoid of cut-scenes, instead opting for the painted graphic novel look (made popular by the *Max Payne* series), which translates nicely onto the PSP.

Most missions involve attacking or defending your turf, sabotaging or implicating your enemies and several driving/chase missions. All pretty much run of the mill stuff. Where this differs, though, is the use of the entire gang for missions. Each member has different strengths and weapons, which you can utilise, and switch between. You can issue various commands to your crew in a style reminiscent of the gang controls used in *The Warriors*. If you die through the course of a mission, you'll switch to the next gang member until complete, or until you have all kicked the bucket. Combat is handled well enough, but could have used a lock-on feature, or at least a crosshair or two. Firing from cover was a laugh and a half, as you don't really target, just fire wildly in you're your adversaries' general direction and hope for the best. The only let down is the way the cars handle. They are sluggish and steer like boats. Driving missions tend to be a real drag.

While *Gangs of London* is not going to break any records, what it does, it does well. Especially the free roaming sections, which give you mini games to attempt like *4 Weeks Later*, a blatant ripoff of the movie *28 Days* where introduce your machete to armies of zombies. *28 Days?* That Sandra Bullock movie? It's *28 Days Later*, you spud - Ed.) We were secretly hoping for some sort of soccer hooligan mini game, but you can't have everything. **Dave Kozicki**

BATTLE CRUISER

There's a point in every bloke's life where it all gets a little too much to bear, and you need a refuge from the missus, work, or just an excuse to get out with your mates and get loaded at the local. *Gangs of London* is no different. Can't get past a mission, and getting pissed off? Take a break, come down to the boozier and relax with a game of darts, skittles, and 8 ball, or just hit the arcade. It's probably the only English pub out there, where you don't have to worry about getting into a biff.



X LAB TEST

BETTER THAN

Three rounds with a Pikey

WORSE THAN

GTA: Liberty City Stories

WHAT THEY NAILED THIS TIME

A UK crime caper with legs

WHAT THEY NEED TO FIX

Auto targeting and car controls

X OFFICIAL VERDICT

GRAPHICS	08	Sweeter than a pint of lager
SOUND	07	Safe as houses
GAMEPLAY	08	Sorted
LIFESPAN	08	Plenty to keep you on the job

"Nice one bruvva!"





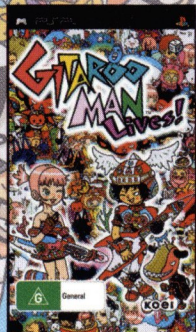
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PlayStation Portable



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X TV



SCRUBS – SEASON FOUR

DIRECTOR: Various **STARRING:** Zach Braff, Donald Faison, Sarah Chalke, John C. McGinley **RATING:** M

FILM: We've said this all before when we reviewed *Scrubs Season Three* earlier this year, but if you've never seen an episode of the Emmy Award winning *Scrubs* you're missing out on one of the best television series ever. Seriously. Since *Seinfeld* wrapped up, sitcoms like *Frasier* and *That '70s Show* and, of course, *Scrubs* valiantly carried the torch – but most have since been lost to the sands of time and the perils of reality TV. *Scrubs* is the best of a dying breed, and it's arguably the best live-action sitcom still shooting. The fourth season sees cameos from celebrities like Heather Graham, Colin Farrell, Matthew Perry and Fred Savage and is packed with more hilarity

in a single episode than an entire season of crap like *Joey*. Better late than never, so do yourself a favour and get on it now.

★★★★★

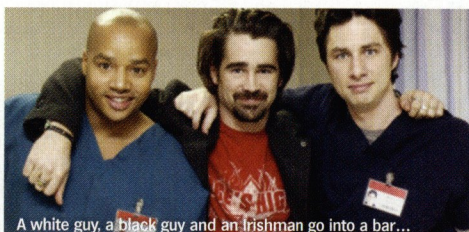
EXTRAS: A host of behind-the-scenes featurettes, deleted scenes and commentaries.

★★★★★

VERDICT: Flawless comedy – *Scrubs* is hilarious, heartfelt, smart and wickedly offbeat. Not since *M*A*S*H* has a TV show so successfully mixed tragedy and comedy in such a fine package. **LR**



"Didn't I see you naked in Boogie Nights?"



A white guy, a black guy and an Irishman go into a bar...

EXTRA! EXTRA!

If you want to win one of five copies of *Scrubs – Season Four* just answer this simple question:

Scrubs star Neil Flynn, the Janitor, was an extra in Harrison Ford's *The Fugitive*. True or false?

Mark entries as 'Scrubs giveaway'. See page 14 for entry details.

WIN!

X ANIME

GUN SWORD

STARRING: A bunch of Japanese dudes
RATING: M



FILM: Ever wonder what *Mad Max* would have been like if you set it in Japan, swapped Mel Gibson's leathers for a tuxedo, made him more of a smart ass and an even more reluctant hero, placed him in a pseudo futuristic Western setting, made him a kick ass martial artist, and gave him a sword that goes as limp as Naz after three beers, yet stands proud at attention when the need arises. Pepper in some *Robotech*-style transformations and you've got *Gun Sword* in a nutshell. Think *Fist of the North Star* with weapons, mech robots and women with impossibly huge, perky boobs.

★★★★★

EXTRAS: Stock standard.
★★

VERDICT: A surprisingly funny cornucopia of genres, combining classic anime themes with a modern pop culture hero and setting. **DK**

X COMEDY

CB4

STARRING: Chris Rock, Phil Hartman
RATING: M



FILM: In the spirit of *This Is Spinal Tap*, *CB4* is a rapumentary by A. White, on one of the hardest, baddest and toughest fictitious groups to ever grace hip-hop. As told by MC Gusto (Rock), the film delves into *CB4*'s origins where they started as a bunch of nobodies and explains how they stole a dangerous gangsta's identity in order to become the hottest group since NWA. Everything from the lyrics to 'Straight Outta Locash' and 'Sweat on my Balls' to the cracks at political agenda as Governors try to have them banned from playing in their state is piss funny. The only problem is that you might not get some of the in-jokes if you haven't followed the history of gangsta rap.

★★★★★

EXTRAS: Ain't no thang but a chicken wing.
★

VERDICT: Not for everyone but anyone who digs Rock's humour will eat it up and want seconds. **PF**

X MARTIAL ARTS

MASTER OF THE FLYING GUILLOTINE

Starring: Yu Wang
Rating: TBC



FILM: It's a mean machine, cuts your head off clean! *Master of the Flying Guillotine* is one of the best martial arts films ever made, a true classic of the genre and regarded by many as the first true tournament film. The one-armed hero finds himself the target of a vengeful assassin, decapitating anyone in his way with his flying guillotine. It's 90% action and 10% plot, but if you're a *Tekken* or *Street Fighter* fan don't miss it – this is where it all began.

★★★★★

EXTRAS: An English dub track for those who don't like reading their movies, plus a rare interview with director and star Yu Wang.

★★★

VERDICT: *Master of the Flying Guillotine* is Quentin Tarantino's favourite kung fu film, and it's not hard to see why. Essential if you loved *Kill Bill*. **LR**

X COMEDY

SCARY MOVIE 4

Starring: Annon Faris
Rating: M



FILM: It's official. *Scary Movie* is the new *Police Academy*. *Scary Movie 4* may have been 'hilariously' billed as the final instalment of the trilogy, but as long as they keep making money they'll keep coming. Helmed by David Zucker (*Flying High*, *The Naked Gun*, *BASEketball*), and once again featuring Anna Faris as the dim-witted Cindy Campbell, the spoofs fly thick and fast, but the one-note jokes have a tendency to fall flat and the whole thing is far more predictable than any of Zucker's previous work. Up for spoofing this time around are *The Grudge*, *The Village* and *War of the Worlds*. Comedy for the undemanding.

★★★★

EXTRAS: Audio commentary, deleted and extended scenes, bloopers and a bevy of featurettes.

★★★

VERDICT: Good for a few chuckles, but it doesn't have much of a shelf life. **LR**

★★★★★ SEINFELD

★★★★★ THAT '70s SHOW

★★★★ FRASIER

★★★ JOEY

★ STACKED

RESPECT THE COX

OPS2 gets chewed out by Sacred Heart's resident short-tempered medicine man, Doctor Cox

OPS2: Dr Cox!

Dr Cox: I'm hoping for your sake there's another Dr. Cox sitting right behind me.

OPS2: How are you?

Dr Cox: I was just now wondering if there was anything that could actually push my headache into a full blown migraine... and there you are.

OPS2: You seem a little impatient...

Dr Cox: Okay, think of what little patience I have as, oh, I don't know, your virginity. You always thought it would be there, until that night in Junior Year when you were feeling a little down about yourself and your pal Kevin, who just wanted to be friends, well, he dropped by and he brought

a copy of *About Last Night* and a four-pack of Bartels & James and woo hoo hoo, it was gone forever – just like my patience is now.

OPS2: Well, is it true that...

Dr Cox: The answer is yes, it WAS me who saw you doing leg lifts in the gym on that inflatable ball. It was quite the display of girl power.

OPS2: We were going to ask why you became a doctor...

Dr Cox: Well, gosh – I guess I became a doctor because ever since I was a little boy, I just wanted to help people. I don't tell this story often, but I remember when I was seven years old, one time I found a bird that had fallen out of its nest, and so I picked him up and I brought him home,

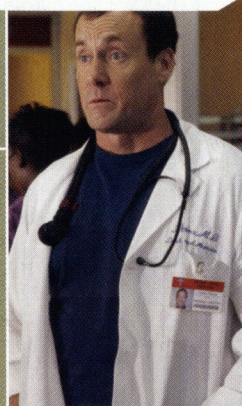
and I made him a house out of an empty shoebox. [laughs] I became a doctor for the same four reasons that everybody does – chicks, money, power and chicks.

OPS2: We also wanted to ask you a medical question about a new drug on the market. The only side effects are nausea, impotence and anal leakage.

Dr Cox: I'm getting two out of three, just from having this conversation.

OPS2: You're getting two out of three, just from having this conversation?

Dr Cox: Oh, gosh, Shannon, thank you so much for clarifying my point by repeating it word for word. And now, in a reciprocal



gesture, can I be included in the planning of your coming-out party?

OPS2: Is that a gay joke?

Dr Cox: No, it's a cotillion joke.

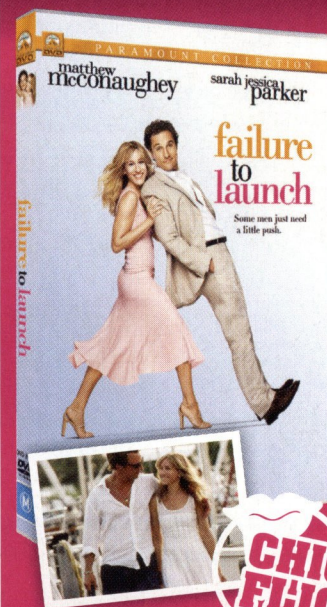
OPS2: So anyway, do...

Dr Cox: If the next two words out of your mouth aren't "See ya" then the third word will be, "Oh my god. My crotch. You've punched me in my crotch".

CHICK FLICK

FAILURE TO LAUNCH

STARRING: Matthew McConaughey
RATING: M



CHICK FLICK

FOR THE GIRLS: Tripp is a 35-year-old man-child living at home. His parents want him out and hire Paula, an expert at getting men to find independence by falling in love with her (despite the fact she looks like a foot). You already know the rest. Matthew McConaughey is on cruise control in the same role he's played a stack of times before (sexy Southern chick magnet, or Owen Wilson without a busted nose) although, to his credit, he doesn't ever seem bored, and the same boyish enthusiasm that got the guy arrested playing bongos naked and stoned way back in 1999 seems to spill over into his performance. If he wants to stuff his wallet with the proceeds of a few paint-by-numbers rom-coms, I guess we won't hold it against him (even though Parker overacts her way through every scene, the premise is hard to believe and the laughs are a little too scattered).

FOR THE GUYS: Not a lot really. Co-star Zoëy Deschanel is your eye candy, but she obviously takes a back seat to Parker the talking horse. At least with *How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days* you got to stare at Kate Hudson for 90 minutes. This one, well... at least it's not *Pride and Prejudice*, right?

VERDICT: *Failure to Launch* splutters off the launchpad and stumbles its way to a happy ending. Inoffensive but pretty insipid. **JG**
★★★

X TV

STRAUCHANIE: PURE B.S.

Starring: Peter Helliar
Rating: PG



FILM: *Pure B.S.* is the warts and all tale of Bryan 'Strauchanie' Strauchan and his somewhat stalled journey to the top as a professional AFL footballer. Son of Soy Bean and Roy

Strauchan, Horsham 3rds reserves hero, last pick by Collingwood in the 2004 draft and, in his own words, absolute superstar legend – Strauchanie takes us behind the scenes for a look at the trials and tribulations of an elite sportsman. This, of course, is all B.S. – Strauchanie is actually underrated Australian comedian Peter Helliar. The skits and piss-takes are consistently funny and family-friendly.

★★★★

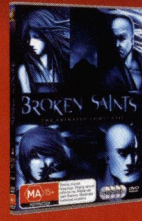
EXTRAS: Bloopers, a Lexus Centre tour and an interview with Caroline Wilson.
★★★★

VERDICT: The running time is a little lean, but Pete has plenty of fun with the character and it clearly shows. **LR**

X ANIME

BROKEN SAINTS

Starring: William B David, Kirby Morrow
Rating: MA15+



FILM: If you've always liked graphic novels, but found the idea of actually reading and turning the pages a bit of a chore, then this could be right down your alley. *Broken Saints*

is a bleak and chilling look at our future shared by three mates who produced the animated comic in their basement on a shoestring budget, posted it on the net and garnered a cult following. Four strangers, united by haunting dreams of the end of the earth, are drawn together towards a distant city, where they hope to unlock the mystery of their visions, uncover a global conspiracy and learn their part in mankind's salvation.

★★★★

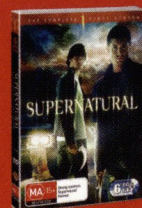
EXTRAS: Making of, behind-the-scenes, interviews and some kooky fan films.
★★★★★

VERDICT: Confronting and offbeat if you like your anime on the surreal side, this one's for you. **DK**

X TV

SUPERNATURAL – THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON

Starring: Jared Padalecki, Jensen Ackles
Rating: MA15+



FILM: Billed by some as an *X-Files* killer, we approached *Supernatural* with more than a little trepidation. However, we were pleasantly surprised to find it's bloody entertaining.

Sam and Dean Winchester are brothers, experts at hunting spooks, but when their old man goes missing while on the trail of the thing that killed their mother, they set about tracking him down. *Supernatural* throws a new ghoulie at the pair each episode, many dug up from popular urban legends – like Hookman, or the Lady in White.

★★★★★

EXTRAS: Ho-hum.
★

VERDICT: It lacks *The X-Files'* panache and *Buffy's* ensemble cast, but *Supernatural's* great production values and excellent direction make it compulsive viewing. **LR**

Scrubs creator Bill Lawrence has jokingly claimed that Neil Flynn (The Janitor) never uses a script. A fourth season script reportedly contained lines that read "Whatever Neil says".

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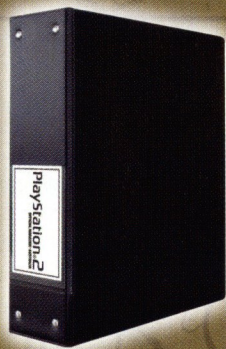
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gamestation

Just got your PS2? Looking for a safe bet to blow your hard-earned on? *OPS2's* GameStation is your best resource for finding top quality PS2 games. Some might be a little long in the tooth, but you'll probably be able to pick them up second-hand. Others are latest releases or Platinum titles, so finding them won't be a hassle. All are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.

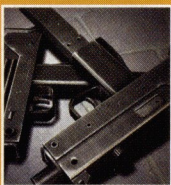


TOP 5

COOLER IN REAL LIFE

MAC-10

Black is great, but in the desert outside of Las Vegas you can shoot a real Mac-10. To sweeten the deal they'll even give you a picture of Osama Bin Laden from the crotch up. Mac-10s are hopelessly inaccurate, so we couldn't shoot him – but neither can the US, so we didn't feel too bad.



DODGE CHARGER

GT4 came close, but driving one of these babies for real is something else. Imagine a rocket-propelled whale and you're close. It takes longer to walk around it when it's standing still than it does to get to full pelt! Goes like a missile, handles like a house.



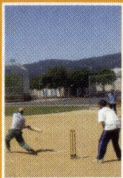
GIBSON SG

Guitar Hero is so good, there's only one thing better – and that's playing a real guitar. We adore our plastic Gibson SGs, but only a real axe will get the groupies tugging your whammy bar and having your name tattooed on their inner thigh.



CRICKET

You already know we're big fans of *Ricky Ponting International Cricket 2005*, but as fun as it is to slog the Poms all over the park, it's more fun to do it to a mate. Smack it over the fence and make him run and get it. Then hit it over his head again. Then again. It never gets old.



F-18 HORNET

Yes, one of *OPS2's* illustrious writers has been in one of these. Only it was on the ground. In an air museum. And he was nine-years-old. He still thinks it was cooler than *Ace Combat*. So many buttons, so little idea what they do...



24: THE GAME

OVERALL 08

Whether you're a diehard fan of the show or just like the idea of messing about with Elisha Cuthbert, *24: The Game* is one of the best action experiences of the year.

AFL PREMIERSHIP 2006

OVERALL 08

Improving on the gameplay and adding new exciting modes, AFL has kicked another goal on the PS2. Just needs better visuals.

APE ESCAPE 3

OVERALL 08

If you're new to the series then this is a great opportunity to get introduced to the wackiness it has to offer, but even veteran chimp chasers will find a new *Ape Escape* experience that they'll be able to jump straight into and go bananas with.

BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT

OVERALL 08

A solid and unique FPS that's only slightly let down by a lack of options and some poor effects. *HotSwapping* rocks!

BLACK

OVERALL 09

This is indeed gun porn, folks – it's light on story and heavy on action, delivering wave after wave of shuddering wargames. With superb firearms and environmental destruction, *Black* goes straight to number one in the FPS genre with a bullet.

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30

OVERALL 08

A distinctly more mature take on war featuring levels of blood, foul language and sheer desperation not seen before in any other videogame.

BROTHERS IN ARMS: EARNED IN BLOOD

OVERALL 08

Improves on the original and retains the maturity that makes the series unique. One of the most intense WWII shooters we've ever played.

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

OVERALL 10

It's eye-meltingly spunky and so fast you'll be unable to blink. Stop looking for an arcade racer that's more fun than *Burnout 3* – you won't be able to find one...

BURNOUT REVENGE

OVERALL 10

...until now! After four games, Criterion is showing no signs of burning out yet. The best racing series around just got a WHOLE lot better. *Revenge* really is sweet!

BUZZ!: THE MUSIC QUIZ

OVERALL 08

BUZZ! The Music Quiz is an irresistible music trivia package and yet another unique gaming experience from Sony.

BUZZ!: THE BIG QUIZ

OVERALL 08

It certainly builds on the original concept, especially in terms of broadening its accessibility and the variety of its question types. Diverse, funny and always competitive fun, *BUZZ!* The Big Quiz is for practically everyone.

CALL OF DUTY 2: BIG RED ONE

OVERALL 09

It's linear and overly scripted but *BRO* is still one of the best WWII games you'll ever play. Move over *Medal of Honor*, *BRO* goes above and beyond the call of duty!

CAPCOM CLASSICS COLLECTION

OVERALL 08

The king of arcade classics delivers the ultimate retro collection featuring golden oldies like *Ghouls 'n Ghosts*, *Street Fighter II* and *Final Fight*. Know your roots!

COLD WINTER

OVERALL 08

A surprisingly superb first-person shooter that brings a lot of fresh ideas, a lot of blood and a lot of carnage. Definitely worth checking out.

CONFLICT: GLOBAL STORM

OVERALL 08

An impressive return for the *Conflict* series – great enemy AI, razor-sharp graphics and great co-op play, although it still has some issues to iron out.

DARKWATCH

OVERALL 08

A great FPS that's only let down by its lack of multiplayer options. A highly original take on an old genre – how many vampire westerns have you seen?

DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

OVERALL 08

Buzzing with energy and conceptual originality, it's a game anyone can pick up and play. Not too deep, but annihilating puny Earthlings has never been more fun.

DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

OVERALL 09

This is the *Devil May Cry* you remember – stunning design, visuals, effects and presentation. It's a work of art so grab it or you'll be the one crying.

DRAGON QUEST VIII: THE JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

OVERALL 08

If you're after an RPG with a little bit of bite and a more askew view, you won't be disappointed. A fun filled, light hearted and slightly twisted romp.

DRIVER: PARALLEL LINES

OVERALL 08

Faster than *Bullitt*, slicker than *Ronin*, more intense than *The French Connection*, more destructive than *The Blues Brothers* and with bigger jumps than *The Dukes of Hazzard*, it's every great Hollywood car chase rolled into one game. Fasten your seatbelt.

EYETOY: PLAY 2

OVERALL 09

Do we need to explain? The innovation and introduction of the video camera to gaming is brilliant. It's just one reason why the PS2 is so cutting edge.

EYETOY: PLAY 3

OVERALL 08

A brilliant collection of games that once again exploit the innovation that is EyeToy.

GUN

OVERALL 09

A brutal, blood-drenched western that succeeds in being both believably authentic and thoroughly exciting.

FIFA WORLD CUP 2006

OVERALL 09

As close as you can get to the World Cup without spending thousands of dollars on a flight to Germany.

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

OVERALL 08

Decent as a singleplayer game, but totally unrivalled for two player fun. Worth a lab for fans purely because of the individual styles and the more balanced fighting system, but just make sure you've got a mate handy to unleash on.

FINAL FANTASY X

OVERALL 09

This was one of the first games on the PS2 to really try and stretch the machine's graphics capabilities to the limit. The result is simply breathtaking.

FLATOUT

OVERALL 08

FlatOut's minigames are worth the asking price alone! The PS2's best demolition derby racer – fantastic damage, fantastic handling, fantastic fun!

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

OVERALL 09

For the first time ever, commanding squads and third-person shooting is so easy you won't even notice you're doing it. If you don't have it – find it.

THE GETAWAY

OVERALL 09

No coin collection, no magic bonuses, just a whole lot of gritty crime action set in a tough old city. Swearing, violence and not a shred of political correctness...

GOD OF WAR

OVERALL 09

Combines bloody action and puzzle-solving in a brilliantly realised, beautiful-looking epic that rocks *HARD* on every level. An *ESSENTIAL* classic for action junkies.

GRAND THEFT AUTO III

OVERALL 10

Revolutionary, open-ended gameplay that has spawned many an imitator, *GTAIII* is not only a watershed for the PS2 – it has changed games forever.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

OVERALL 10

Takes everything great about *GTAIII*, adds countless extra features, paints it in '80s pastel colours and adds a totally kick-arse retro soundtrack.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

OVERALL 10

This is the greatest videogame ever made. Run, drive, fly, swim, boat, cycle, ride or even skydive your way through a whole state of mayhem.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

OVERALL 09

Pared of *San Andreas'* features, this PS2 version of the PSP's best-selling title is nonetheless a great game. Return to the city that started a revolution.

GRAN TURISMO 4

OVERALL 10

The biggest, most authentic and most realistic racing simulator ever. 700 unique cars from 1886 to 2005 that handle exactly like their real-world counterparts. It's a car nut's wet dream.

GUITAR HERO

OVERALL 10

Guitar Hero is better than sex, more addictive than drugs and every bit as cool as real rock & roll. Fill the empty space where your air guitar used to and let there be rock!

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

OVERALL 09

It's ethically dubious but there's no doubt about how good *Silent Assassin* is. Multiple solutions, fantastic rag-doll physics and enough atmosphere to choke a horse.

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

OVERALL 09

Fixes a lot of the niggling issues from the previous games while delivering a whole host of new brutal ways to take out your targets. Brilliantly executed.

ICO

OVERALL 09

The dreamy-looking, wonderfully peaceful puzzling adventure gameplay, along with an entirely unique feel make people fall in love with *Ico*.

JAK II: RENEGADE

OVERALL 10

Infusing *GTA*-style gameplay into the *Jak & Daxter* world has made this the first platformer that appeals to both infants and adults alike.

JAK 3

OVERALL 09

Rounds out the trilogy in style – *Jak's* evolution from pixie-eared pansy to platforming badass is complete. Great mix of genres that'll keep you on your toes to the end.

JAK X: COMBAT RACING

OVERALL 08

It's obviously inspired by *Burnout Revenge* but it has enough unexpected twists and turns to keep you gripping the wheel.

JUICED

OVERALL 08

It can't match *Midnight Club 3* for thrills, but it boasts a far more impressive stable for car lovers than *NFSU2*. Not revolutionary, but a solid racer for hardcore rev-heads.

KING KONG

OVERALL 09

On par with *Resident Evil 4* as one of the most exciting games ever.

LEGO STAR WARS

OVERALL 08

Parents should buy *LEGO Star Wars* for their kids, no matter how old they are. It's the most fun we've had pushing coloured blocks around since *Tetris*. Easily the best game based on the *Star Wars* prequels.

MASHED

OVERALL 09

Totally addictive multiplayer – make sure you've got a multitap. This is why you got into gaming to begin with.

THE MATRIX: PATH OF NEO

OVERALL 08

With a bit more polish this could have been *The One*. Aching close, but still very enjoyable when it works. *Woah...*

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE

OVERALL 09

The opening level, the beach landing on Omaha, is perhaps one of the most atmospheric and moving game moments to date. Still one of the PS2's best shooters.

MERCENARIES

OVERALL 08

An impeccably designed and action-packed sandbox of free-roaming combat. Steal choppers, jack tanks – *Mercenaries* is fun, fun, fun 'til the commies take your C4 away.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

OVERALL 10

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

OVERALL 10

It's the ultimate lone-soldier adventure, packed with riveting combat and a stunning jungle setting. Acquire immediately.

MICRO MACHINES V4

OVERALL 08

Pint-sized, pocket-racing action. Four-player, top down racing hasn't been this much fun since *Mashed*. Fast, frenetic fun.

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX

OVERALL 09

You don't just get the fantastic *MC3* in its entirety, but also 24 extra vehicles, 25 added songs and a new stage, Tokyo. This is a ridiculously good package for its tiny cost. If you can find a more stylish street racer cheaper than this, you're lying.

MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS

OVERALL 08

A kick ass beat 'em up with a classic *Mortal Kombat* feel. Outstanding! *Mortal Kombat* fans will not be disappointed.

Your definitive guide to the ever-expanding library of PlayStation 2 games



MX UNLEASHED	OVERALL 08
Huge freestyle countryside, great riding physics and addictive bonus vehicles like a stunt plane, Baja Buggy, monster truck and even a chopper. Spot on.	
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2	OVERALL 09
Bigger, badder and faster than its already impressive older brother, if the huge city and extra rides can't satisfy your need for speed we don't know what will.	
NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED	OVERALL 09
Tuners, muscles and European exotics meet in a fantastic racer featuring some of the most intense cop chases you'll ever find – all the speed you need!	
ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE	OVERALL 09
An epic time-travelling samurai adventure featuring everyone's favourite Frenchman Jean Reno. A classic in anyone's book.	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME	OVERALL 09
It captures everything that made the original a classic and combines it with slick graphics, smooth gameplay and a hot chick to fight alongside you.	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN	OVERALL 09
It's gone down a decidedly darker road than its enchanting predecessor but it still one of the best adventures money can buy.	
PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES	OVERALL 09
A fittingly breathtaking finale, it dethrones its stablemates and steals the crown. It's good to be the King! Or the Prince, at least...	
PROJECT: SNOWBLIND	OVERALL 08
Kicks off with a bang and never lets up. Gob-smacking graphics, an explosive arsenal and consistently exiting and varied gameplay.	
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5	OVERALL 10
If you enjoy sports games, especially long bouts of multiplayer tomfoolery – look no further. Best soccer action on PS2 – no question.	
PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY	OVERALL 09
This psychic-charged jaunt takes the third-person shooter, levitates it into the air and makes it slap itself involuntarily.	
PSYCHONAUTS	OVERALL 08
From the creator of <i>Grim Fandango</i> , <i>Psychonauts</i> is warped, wacky and worth a purchase for platform fans.	
THE PUNISHER	OVERALL 08
Far more loyal to comic than it's celluloid sibling – bring on the bullets, break out the body bags and prepare for punishment. You won't regret it.	
RATCHET AND CLANK 2: LOCKED AND LOADED	OVERALL 09
The sheer number of the gadgets and crazy weapons alone would make this game worth playing. Hilarious fun.	
RATCHET AND CLANK 3: UP YOUR ARSENAL	OVERALL 09
The single player game is fantastic, but the online multiplayer mode puts most other shooters to shame. Great gadgets and humour abound.	
RATCHET: GLADIATOR	OVERALL 09
An explosive new <i>Ratchet</i> adventure that everyone should pick up. Not too different from <i>Up Your Arsenal</i> , but you'll still have a blast!	
RED DEAD REVOLVER	OVERALL 08
A great spaghetti western shooter bursting with cool characters, duels and frontier towns, brilliant presentation and a sweet Sergio Leone-style soundtrack.	
RESIDENT EVIL 4	OVERALL 10
<i>Resident Evil 4</i> is the perfect action game. Destined to be limited for years to come, this game is so good it should be compulsory. It's like you're playing a 20 hour cutscene!	
REZ	OVERALL 09
Super-stylish retro-futuristic graphics, intense old-school shoot 'em up gameplay and pumping dance tracks from top artists which remix themselves as you play.	
RICKY PONTING INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2005	OVERALL 09
So undeniably enjoyable that you really can't afford to miss it. It's one of the best sports games we've played and the multiplayer is unbeatable. Miles ahead of <i>Cricket 2005</i> .	
ROGUE TROOPER	OVERALL 08
An absolute must-have for fans of the comic book series, and an impressive slab of sci-fi action for everyone else. A faithful interpretation of the 2000AD comic, with plenty of solid stealth action to sink your teeth into.	
RUGBY 06	OVERALL 08
Minor AI quibbles aside we've finally got a game of rugby that looks as good as other top-tier sports titles. About bloody time, too!	
RUGBY LEAGUE 2	OVERALL 09
With great graphics and addictive multiplayer it successfully captures all the action of the NRL. Puts the boot into the competition and sends 'em straight to the blood bin!	
SECOND SIGHT	OVERALL 09
Stylish, gripping and great fun. Possess your enemies, throw them around the room with your mind or just shoot 'em. Definitely worth looking into.	
SHADOW OF ROME	OVERALL 08
A superb realisation of bloody arena combat. Some of the maximum fun you can have with a sword. For those who are about to die – we salute you.	
SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS	OVERALL 09
If you're looking for an adventure unlike any other you've ever undertaken, you've found it. Simply breathtaking.	
SILENT HILL 3	OVERALL 09
One of the nastiest games on PS2 – arguably scarier than <i>Silent Hill 4</i> . We dare you to play it alone with the lights out.	
THE SIMPSONS: HIT AND RUN	OVERALL 08
When it comes to <i>GTA</i> rip-offs they don't get any more blatant than this, but walking around a living and breathing Springfield is so much fun that you won't care.	
SINGSTAR PARTY	OVERALL 09
Another 30 songs to crucify and new multiplayer modes.	
SINGSTAR POP	OVERALL 09
Another solid <i>SingStar</i> title at a bargain price. New modes plus Australian and New Zealand tracks. Sweet...	
SINGSTAR '80s	OVERALL 09
Trashy, tacky and totally dated – we love it! The <i>SingStar</i> hits just keep on coming!	

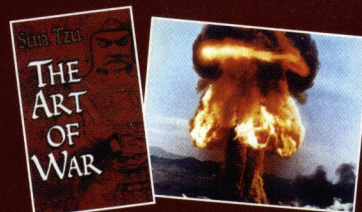
SINGSTAR ROCKS!	OVERALL 09
Scream your way through The Offspring, Nirvana, Powderfinger, Grinspoon, The Screaming Jets, INXS, Stereophonics, Blur, Deep Purple and The Rolling Stones. We're gonna rock 'n' roll all night (and party every day). It's <i>SingStar</i> with balls!	
SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES	OVERALL 08
Colourful and varied, <i>Sly's</i> third outing will please long time fans.	
SOCOM 3: US NAVY SEALS	OVERALL 09
As a single-player game it is a satisfying tactical action experience, but as an online game it's an intense, up-all-night addiction. The best online game and one that should keep you going and going until PS3.	
SOUL CALIBUR II	OVERALL 10
It's the easiest fighting game to get into, but to be truly great will take years! The characters, weapons and the mind-blowing special moves are second to none.	
SOUL CALIBUR III	OVERALL 09
Still the best fighter around but you've already fought this fight before. Not a massive leap from <i>Soul Calibur II</i> but still essential for fighting fans!	
SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR	OVERALL 08
Featuring stunning characters & backgrounds, <i>Spartan: Total Warrior</i> is an intense action title that may look simple but requires a lot of brains to survive.	
SPIDER-MAN 2	OVERALL 09
A massive, free-roaming Manhattan complete with every major landmark – swing, jump, sprint and dive anywhere you want.	
SSX 3	OVERALL 09
It's one mountain with an avalanche of features. You decide whether you want to race against your arch-nemesis, hang out on the half-pipe or just explore. Snow joke.	
STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT	OVERALL 08
Live the battles from the <i>Star Wars</i> films on the front lines with weapons and vehicles from all the films so far. Need this game, you do.	
THE SUFFERING: TIES THAT BIND	OVERALL 08
Doesn't add a great deal to the original concept, but still plenty of fun. Suffering that's actually enjoyable? Kinky!	
TEKKEN 5	OVERALL 09
<i>Tekken 5</i> is a major improvement over <i>Tekken 4</i> . Damn this game looks good. If it was a girl she'd have Kylie Minogue's bon-bon and Shannon Elizabeth's jubbles.	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 06	OVERALL 08
The best <i>Tiger</i> yet, but far from a revolution.	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	OVERALL 10
The fastest, smoothest first-person shooter ever, complete with masses of challenges and link-up support for up to 16 players at once!	
TIMESPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT	OVERALL 09
More fun than we thought possible. Super smooth, super stylish and the best reason yet to go online!	
TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND	OVERALL 09
The new Lara is as agile as the Prince of Persia and as swift as the God of War. And she's got boobs. It's short, but oh so sweet. Undoubtedly the best <i>Tomb Raider</i> game since the original classic.	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL	OVERALL 10
The level of immersion the game creates. The stealth combined with the shadowy environs truly add up to an involving experience. Plus the gadgets kick serious ass!	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	OVERALL 09
Adds a great multiplayer mode and a few new modes to the already brilliant package – it's just a little on the short side.	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY	OVERALL 09
Slick, stylish, and cooler than a Sugar Daddy, <i>Chaos Theory</i> is the best "pure" stealth game on the PS2. If you haven't got into the series yet, now is the perfect time.	
TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND	OVERALL 08
Better than the <i>Underground</i> games, but the series is in need of a bigger overhaul.	
TOURIST TROPHY	OVERALL 08
Plyphony's first crack at motorcycle racing is great, but there's still plenty of room for improvement.	
TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA	OVERALL 08
Its lack of originality saw it labelled by some as simply <i>GTA: LA</i> , but the addition of intense John Woo-style shootouts make this a brilliant, if brief, roller coaster ride.	
ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN	OVERALL 08
It's the best looking and, for the most part, best playing superhero game ever made. A no brainer for webheads. Trust your spidey-sense!	
URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE	OVERALL 09
It's violent, it's sadistic, but it's this guilty pleasure is one of the best FPS games on PS2. If you've already cracked <i>Black</i> , don't miss <i>Urban Chaos</i> – it's a riot!	
V8 SUPERCARS 3	OVERALL 10
<i>V83</i> is the greatest racing simulator ever. 21 cars on track, wicked damage and the most realistic racing ever – <i>V83</i> doesn't just trump <i>V82</i> in every way, it's even better than <i>GTA</i> . Get it now!	
THE WARRIORS	OVERALL 09
Violent, vicious and seriously cool, <i>The Warriors</i> is an instant classic. The presentation is awesome and the combat rocks. Can you dig it, suckers?	
WIPEOUT: FUSION	OVERALL 09
A face-meltingly fast, futuristic roller coaster of a racing game.	
WE LOVE KATAMARI	OVERALL 08
If there's been one game in the past six months that's made us team stare in fascination for hours and giggle hysterically, it's this one. We <i>Love Katamari</i> ? Hell yes we do!	
WRC: RALLY EVOLVED	OVERALL 09
Exactly the shot in the arm the genre needed – this is as good as rally games will get until the PS3 arrives. Gritty, realistic and it looks absolutely stunning.	
WWE: SMACKDOWN! VS. RAW 2006	OVERALL 10
Not only a new benchmark for wrestling games; it's a new standard for sports games in general.	
XIII	OVERALL 09
The graphics actually use cel shading to great effect (for one of the only times ever). You feel as if you've wandered into a three-dimensional comic book.	

PSone and real-time strategy – two terms that don't exactly mix. Like beer and chocolate – they go together, but not that well. RTS games are mostly the domain



of war boffins and armchair generals, but there was one particular example from way back in heady 1996 that we're not afraid to admit still stands up today – *Command & Conquer: Red Alert*. Set after World War II, *Red Alert* took place in an alternate timeline where Albert Einstein invented a time machine called the Chronosphere. He used it to kill Adolf Hitler and try to stop WWII, but the Soviet Union invades Europe instead. *Red Alert* was more than just the sum of its parts. Sure the pulsing, techno march music was hilariously bad (the *Red Alert* theme 'Hell March' mixed electric guitar, marching feet and synthesizers to wonderfully silly effect), and the FMV sequences dodgy at best. The graphics were rubbish too and, come to think of it, the sound wasn't all that remarkable either. But there was something truly satisfying about building enough infrastructure to churn out a fleet of helicopters you could use to methodically annihilate your opponents, building by building, or charging towards the enemy with a few dozen rocket soldiers and attack dogs. And what about installing an impenetrable array of tesla coils that would zap would-be invaders and turn them into a red stain on the badly pixelated battlefield? Or blasting other bases with your giant battle cruiser. Great stuff. RTS games look infinitely better these days, but the magic has gone missing. *Red Alert* was FUN. And it still is.

LOVECHILD



Intelligent, tactical warfare combined with ridiculously powerful weaponry. Like chess with nukes.

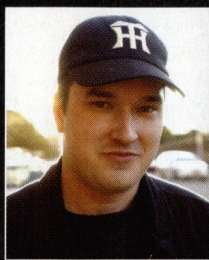




➔ On The DVD

PLAYABLE DEMOS

Other magazines let you watch, OPS2 lets you play!



The Force is strong in this month's demo disc. The sequel to one of the biggest surprise hits of 2005 headlines this month's disc. *LEGO Star Wars II* retells the trilogy everybody actually liked complete with the LEGO charm that made everyone want to get their hands on it.

The Japanese smash hit, *Yakuza*, also makes an impression this month. Combining *GTA* with *Virtua*

Fighter, the story revolves around a former *Yakuza* up-and-comer who's just done 10 years for a murder he didn't commit and has wound up in another sticky situation involving the Japanese criminal underground. Whammy.

With the Formula One season wrapping up what better way to keep your motor running until the next season than with the latest simulation of the fastest sport on the planet. Think you're the next Mark Webber? Then prove it by conquering our challenge.

Wannabe ninjas can get an education with our *Shinobido* demo. This is not for fans of hacking and slashing. *Shinobido* requires discipline, patience and speed. The kills are totally worth the wait though.

We've also brought back *B-Boy*, *SingStar Rocks!*, *Black*, *Forbidden Siren 2*, *FIFA 06* and *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater*. For all you cheaters out there we've also thrown on some downloads for some classic gems like *Silent Hill 3*, *Jak II* and *Enter the Matrix*.

What are you waiting for, get into it! You know it!

Paul Frew
PAUL FREW
Staff Writer

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the ↓ and ↑ keys. To choose within a section use ← and →. Press ⊗ to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.



YOUR DISC

Every issue, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* brings you something no other magazine can – playable demos. Offering exclusive levels, tracks and missions, our playable DVD enables you to try the very latest PS2 games before you buy, often weeks, even months before release. Why risk your hard-earned cash on a \$100 game when you can try it out on our cover-mounted DVD? From *Burnout Revenge* and *MGS3* to *NFS Most Wanted* and *God of War*, we've always featured playable demos of the games that matter. Throw in top quality video footage of the hits of the future and our DVD is the best bargain on the shelves.

■ DISC PROBLEMS?

If your disc isn't loading up, try laying your PS2 upside-down before loading to relieve pressure on the disc laser. If problems persist then simply send it back to this address for a replacement. Demo Disc Returns
Official PlayStation 2 Magazine
P.O. Box 1037, Bondi Junction NSW 1355



✕ ADVENTURE

LEGO STAR WARS II

100% Jar Jar Binks free

DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION ■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ PLAYERS: 1-2

Goosebumps will cover your body the moment "a long time ago in a galaxy far, far, away" appears on screen. You'll be heading to Mos Eisley Spaceport from *Episode IV* to collect some ship parts and kill some stormtroopers. Obi-Wan will be leading the clan with Luke, R2-D2 and C-3PO. You'll need to work together as a team if you're going to not only finish the level but conquer our challenge. Don't forget the Force, it's ☉.



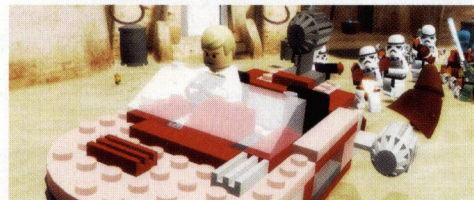
✕ BEAT 'EM UP

YAKUZA

Don't worry, you won't lose a finger

DISTRIBUTOR: THQ ■ OUT: TBC ■ PLAYERS: 1

Get a glimpse of what *Yakuza* has to offer before taking to the streets of Tokyo. You'll run into a few troublemakers on your journey and this is where *Yakuza* strays from *GTA* territory and becomes a knockout brawler. Kicking arse and taking names, that's what this game is all about.



✕ RACING

FORMULA ONE 2006

The season's not over yet...

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ OUT: NOW ■ PLAYERS: 1-2

You'll have 11 official Formula One teams to choose from. Forget Schumacher and the Ferrari, you can't go past the Aussie favourite, Mark Webber. While there are only two tracks available to rip it up on, you'll get three laps to show your potential. So make it worth it.



X STEALTH

SHINOBIDO

Become the silent assassin

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ OUT: NOW ■ PLAYERS: 1

You've got three missions to choose from in this demo. You can assassinate a shop merchant, slaughter an army of barbarians or, er, deliver some rice to a group out of town. Silent kills are recommended because once you get busted you're a dead man. So stick to the shadows and only make the kill when the coast is clear.



X SURVIVAL-HORROR

FORBIDDEN SIREN 2

Put on your brown underpants

DISTRIBUTOR: SONY ■ OUT: NOW ■ PLAYERS: 1

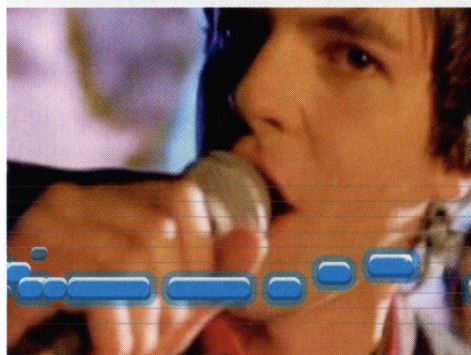
Get a taste of one of the most horrific games to ever hit the PS2. Follow the prompts and eventually you'll find yourself in a sticky situation that involves you saving the girl from a bloodied zombie. Keep an ear out for the wailing siren for the rest of the demo. It doesn't mean there's a red light special at your local Myer, it means you're in deep trouble.



X DANCE

B-BOY

Come on and bust a move!



X PARTY

SINGSTAR ROCKS!

Warm up the vocal chords and rock out!



X FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

BLACK

Guns DO kill people, here's the proof.



GAME SAVES

How many games have you given up on because you've got stuck at one of the impossible parts? Well maybe it's time to revisit some of the old classics from your PS2 library with a little help from our downloads. Here are the save files you can download this month:

Primal
The Mark of Kri
Jak II
Amplitude
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty
Star Wars The Clone Wars
Star Wars Bounty Hunter
TimeSplitters 2
Zone of the Enders 2
Auto Modellista
Enter The Matrix
007: Night Fire
Silent Hill 3
Return To Castle Wolfenstein
Chaos Legion
Ford Racing 2
Medal of Honor Rising Sun
Beyond Good & Evil
Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King



ALSO ON THE DISC - PLAYABLE DEMOS OF FIFA 06 AND METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

WHAT IS RE-PLAY?

This section will breathe new life into your old games. Each month we'll either show you amazing things to find or set challenges for you to take up. We also welcome input from you, so if you've found something cool that you'd like to share with the other readers, or you'd like to set a challenge, just let us know! Even if you haven't found anything yourself, write in and tell us what game you'd like to get more out of and we'll do the searching for you. Email us at OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au or send it the old-fashioned way to OPS2 Re-Play, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355.



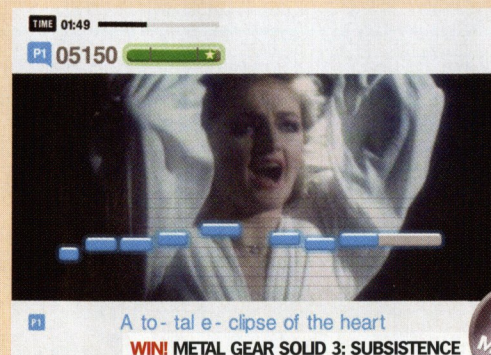
Be sure to check out our official challenges too. Each month we'll come up with a challenge of our own and select another from your own submitted challenges. To be an official challenge it must be easy to verify, and you'll also need to take care there aren't any cheats that'll affect the results. If you want to enter our official challenges just record on videotape or photograph your best efforts and send them in to PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW, 1355, clearly marked 'OPS2 Re-Play challenge'. We'll print the top results in future issues. The highest score in each of the two official challenges will win the game of the month, so go nuts!

OFFICIAL CHALLENGE

If there's one piece of advice we can give you it's that when you start pushing a woman's buttons, you don't want to rush it. It's a marathon, not a sprint. No matter how competitive you are, this is one event you don't want to come first in. On the other hand, once you start pushing Lara's buttons in our *Tomb Raider: Legend* challenge it's a different story altogether. Your best Time Trial result for the 'Bolivia Redux' level is what we're after, so get cracking! You'll want to aim for less than 4:15 to be in the running. Take a picture of your top score, mark your entry 'Re-play Challenge - *Tomb Raider: Legend*', refer to the giveaway details on page 14 for entry instructions and send your picture in before October 10!



OFFICIAL READER CHALLENGE



Turn around, every now and then we get a little bit lonely and you're never coming around. Turn around, every now and then we get a little bit tired of listening to the sound of our tears. Turn around, every now and then we get a little bit nervous that the best of all the years have gone by. Turn around, every now and then we get a little bit terrified and then we see the f***ing look in your eyes... Sorry, we got a little sidetracked there. Anyway, reader Kate Barrett has thrown down a karaoke gauntlet. The game? *SingStar Anthems*. The song? 'Total Eclipse of the Heart' (normal difficulty, regular length). Take a picture of your score, mark your entry 'Re-play challenge - *SingStar Anthems*', refer to the giveaway on page 14 for entry details and have them in before October 10!

WINNERS

We've been bloody impressed with the entries this month. The massive *Guitar Hero* scores indicate that the spirit of rock 'n' roll is still pumping its beer-soaked fist in the Australian sky, and the insanely fast mission times for *Hitman: Blood Money* tell us there's some ruthlessly quick killers out there. You can't even boil an egg in the time it took some of our readers to clock the first mission! A copy of Rockstar's PSP-cum-PS2 crime epic *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories* will be on the way out to the top score holder in each challenge shortly, but congratulations also to everyone who entered!



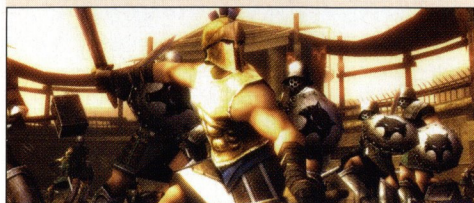
August Challenge - *Guitar Hero*

TOP SCORES!
Adrian Panousis, NSW
 470,002
Colin Elliott, SA
 466,812
Jodie Lacey, Qld
 423,974
Daniel Brooks, NSW
 417,284
Wyston Chew, Vic
 408,252

August Reader Challenge - *Hitman: Blood Money*

TOP SCORES!
Kirk Wickham, Qld
 1:47
Dylan Cook, NSW
 2:06
Ben Sipos, WA
 2:54
Derek Wheeler, NZ
 4:50
Hank Steele
 5:19

READER CHALLENGES



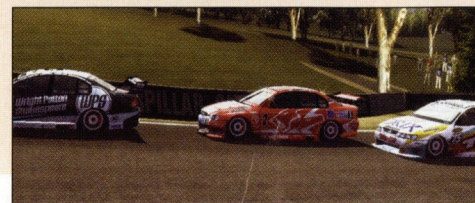
Jak-a-nator, OPS2 forum

Spartan: Total Warrior (PS2) - Get past level 15 in the all star arena.



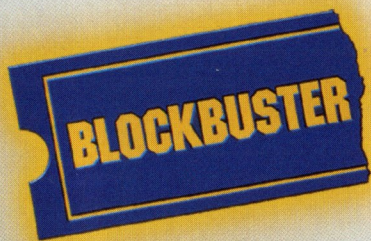
Adam Killen, via email

Ricky Ponting International Cricket 2005 (PS2) - Smack six sixes in one over against the West Indies on State difficulty.



Nick, Vic

V8 Supercars 3 (PS2) - Can you beat my Bathurst 1000 time of six hours, nine minutes, 54.09 seconds? All sim settings must be on, and bonnet or cockpit view is essential!



Entertainment

BRINGS YOU MORE...

WIN 1 of 5

LEGO STAR WARS II

THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

PACKS

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ACTIVISION



*Vertical Stand sold separately

See full terms and conditions at www.blockbuster.com.au. Competition commences 15/09/06 and closes 13/10/06.

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CODE VAULT

Want to cheat your way to victory? We've got you covered!



KINGDOM HEARTS II

Instant Max Drive

If you want your drive bar maxed, use this glitch. Go to the Underworld tournament and talk to Panic. After talking to him, a screen with all the tournaments pops up. Go to any one and once you enter the first battle your Drive Bar will be completely filled. Pause and quit. When you leave, your bar will still be full. This will help you level up forms and summons quicker. If you return to the world map while in a drive form you will also still have a full drive gauge.

Torn Pages

Torn Pages are required to play and complete all of 100 Acre Woods

Torn Page 1

In the Disney Castle's Library

Torn Page 2

In the Pride Lands at the Oasis

Torn Page 3

In Hallow Bastion at the Crystal Fissure

Torn Page 4

At the Land of the Dragons in the Throne Room

Torn Page 5

At Agrabah at the Tower

Summons

Chicken Little

In the 100 Acre Wood, after the second cut-scene

Genie

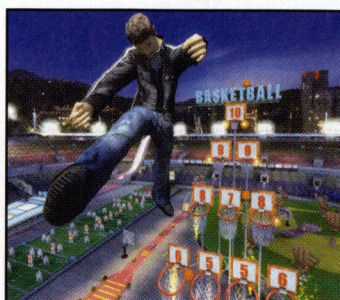
Defeat Volcano Lord and Blizzard Lord

Peter Pan

In the ship graveyard on your second visit to Port Royal

Stitch

In the hallway to the computer room in Hollow Bastion, after you get Master Form



FLATOUT 2

At main screen go to Extras, then to Enter Code

GIVEPIX

All cars and one million credits

GIVEALL

All tracks

RAIDERS

Big Rig truck

WOTKINS

Flatmobile

RUTTO

Pimp car

KALJAKOPPA

Rocket car

GIEVCARPLZ

School bus

ACE COMBAT ZERO: THE BELKAN WAR

ADF-01 Falken (easy way)

With an Ace Combat 5 save file on the same memory card, to get a Falken for purchase just beat the game in all three Ace Styles on any difficulty

ADF-01 (hard way)

Obtain all supreme ace medals

X-02 (easy way)

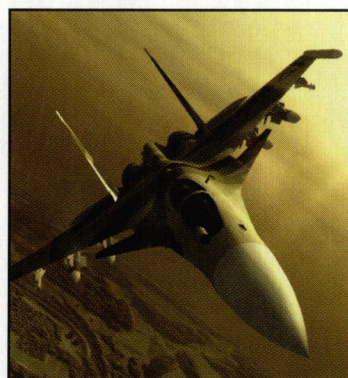
If you have an Ace Combat 4 save file you'll unlock the X-02 after finishing the first mission

X-02 (hard way)

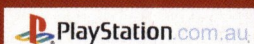
Beat the game twice on any difficulty but with a different ace style from your first time

F-22A

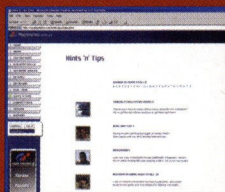
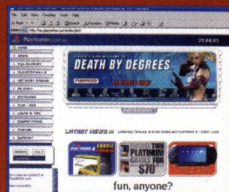
Beat the game once on any difficulty



ULTIMATE CHEAT SITE



HEAD ON OVER TO [HTTP://AU.PLAYSTATION.COM/](http://au.playstation.com/) TO GET THE ULTIMATE CHEAT FIX. YOU'LL NEED TO REGISTER WITH THE SITE (BUT IT'S FREE AND EASY TO DO) THEN YOU'LL HAVE FULL ACCESS TO ALL THE CHEATS.



GET YOURSELF OVER TO
[HTTP://AU.PLAYSTATION.COM](http://au.playstation.com)

NO SUBSCRIPTIONS : NO CLUBS : NO CONS : OUR GUARANTEE

RINGTONES

CHART	TRUE	MP3	POLY
Please Please.....	173181	173187	171734
Unfaithful.....	173171	173177	171730
Hips Don't Lie.....	177855	177968	171678
Smile.....	173062	173070	171714
You Give Me Something.....	173182	173188	171735
Voodoo Child.....	173160	173167	171723
Maneater.....	177846	177851	171673
I Wish I Was A Punk Rocker.....	177603	177608	171661
Last Request.....	173158	173165	171721
Smiley Faces.....	173183	173189	171736
I Love My Chick.....	173169	173175	171728
In The Morning.....	173063	173071	171715
She Moves In Her Own Way.....	177951	177966	171709
Sexy Love.....	173061	173069	171713
Buttons.....	177950	177965	171708

TALKING TONES

REAL	
Basil Fawlty.....	178396
Daffyd - Little Britain.....	178406
Mad German.....	178431
You Muppet.....	178474
The Ateam intro.....	177169
Dirty Dwarves.....	177173
London Underground.....	177174
Southpark - Suck On My Balls.....	177176
Darth Vader.....	177300
Homer Simpson.....	177306
Pulp Fiction - Whats Fonzi Like.....	177879
Happy Gilmore - Go Home Ball.....	177923
Scarface - Say Hello To My Little Friend.....	177924
The Shining - Heres Johnny!.....	177925
Napoleon Dynamite - Freeking Idiot.....	177920

WARNING TONES

REAL	
A**hole Alert.....	177178
Bullshi**r Alert.....	177181
Bunny Boiler Alert.....	177182
Fatboy Alert.....	177186
Ginger Alert.....	177187
Weirdo Alert.....	177194
Your Dealer Alert.....	177195

LEGENDS

TRUE	
2Pac - Changes.....	177476
ACDC - Back In Black.....	177492
Bon Jovi - Livin On A Prayer.....	177537
Don McLean - American Pie.....	177673
Guns N Roses - Sweet Child Of Mine.....	177706
Guns N Roses - Welcome To The Jungle.....	177707
Johnny Cash - Ring Of Fire.....	177732
Rage Against The Machine - Bullet In Your Head.....	177822
Nirvana - Smells Like Teen Spirit.....	177778
Radiohead - No Surprises.....	177820
Ram Jam - Black Betty.....	177825
Red Hot Chili Peppers - Give It Away.....	177829
Faithless - Insomnia 2005.....	177897
Run DMC Vs Jason Nevins - Its Tricky.....	177972
System Of A Down - BYOB.....	173012
The Jam - Town Called Malice.....	173073

HIP HOP

TRUE	MP3	POLY
In Da Club.....	178479	177483
Just Lose It.....	178194	177678
Ill Be Missing You.....	178921	177797
Gangsta's Paradise.....	178617	177590
You Can Do It.....	178198	177714
Nasty Girl.....	178577	171527
Changes.....	178475	177476

FREE RUNNING VIDEOS

175331	175336	175337	175342	175339	175341	175334
WALL BACK FLIP	WALL FLIP	WALL RUNNERS	HIGH HAND STANDS	AWESOME FREE RUNNING	CRAZY ACTION	SPIN FLIPS

SHOCKER VIDS!

174339	174869	174128	174868	174798	174799	174794
SCARY SHOCKER	DON'T POKE LEOPARDS	LOOK CLOSELY SCARY	SERIES OF SHOCK	MAKE YA JUMP	BEACH SHOCKER	ALL SO QUIET

RED HOT GIRL VIDEOS

174913	175086	175087	176287	176104
BLONDE TEASER	HOT BLONDE	NAUGHTY BRUNETTE	RED HOT BABE	CHECK ME OUT
179586	175245	179465	179480	175246
FOX BLONDE	BIKINI DANCER	TEMPTING HONEY	BEDROOM FUN	RUDE RED HEAD

ULTIMATE BRAWLIN VDS

175261	175265	175266	175268	175269
BEACH FACE OFF	WELL HARD MIDGET	GIRL FIGHT	BIKINI SCRAP	LEATHER THE S***
175270	175271	175272	179473	174984
ACTION BRAWLING	BIZARRE KO	PARTY FIGHTING	CRAZY BEAR FIGHT	DROPPED ON URE A**

VIDS TO SHOW YA MATES

174333	174802	174803	174680	174858
NINJA VS CHAV	FIRECRACKER IDIOT	SUPER KO	TRACTOR BOY RACER	LOST IN TRANSLATION
174380	174341	174131	174197	175259
HOW NOT TO FIRE A CANNON	FACE FULL OF A**	OFFICE PLEASURE	BATMAN VS THE WARDROBE	DANCING GRAN
174860	175262	174859	175264	174808
JESUS RAPPER	SNAKE BITE	DEAF KARAOKE	TROLLEY CRASH	CATS ARE STUPID

COOL ANIMATIONS

176223	176365	176369	179310
BOOB JUGGLERS	LIGHTNING	SPLATT	BART MOONIE
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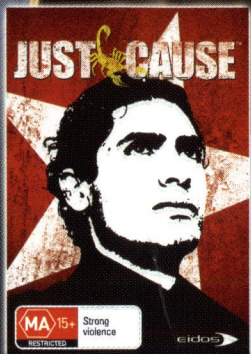
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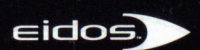
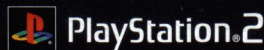
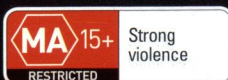
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